

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL



EXECUTIVE SERVICES

Chief Executive
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NB - This agenda contains proposals, recommendations and options. These do not represent Council policy or decisions until they have received proper consideration through the full decision making process.

Contact: Democratic Services
committee.services@tmbc.gov.uk

17 June 2026

To: MEMBERS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
(Copies to all Members of the Council)

Dear Sir/Madam

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held in the Council Chamber, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill on Thursday, 25th June, 2026 commencing at 7.30 pm.

Members of the Committee are required to attend in person. Other Members may attend in person or participate online via MS Teams.

Information on how to observe the meeting will be published on the Council's website.

Yours faithfully

DAMIAN ROBERTS

Chief Executive

A G E N D A

1. Guidance on the Conduct of Meetings 5 - 8

PART 1 - PUBLIC

2. Apologies for absence

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------------|---------|
| 3. | Notification of Substitute Members | 9 - 10 |
| 4. | Declarations of interest | 11 - 12 |

Members are reminded of their obligation under the Council's Code of Conduct to disclose any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests in any matter(s) to be considered or being considered at the meeting. These are explained in the Code of Conduct on the Council's website at [Code of conduct for members – Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council \(tmbc.gov.uk\)](https://www.tmbc.gov.uk/code-of-conduct-for-members).

Members in any doubt about such declarations are advised to contact Legal or Democratic Services in advance of the meeting.

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| 5. | Minutes | 13 - 20 |
|----|---------|---------|

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 23 April 2026.

- | | | |
|----|---|---------|
| 6. | Any Executive Decisions which have been 'called in' | 21 - 22 |
|----|---|---------|

Matters for Recommendation to the Council

- | | | |
|----|--|---------|
| 7. | Review of Rules for Convening Meetings | 23 - 34 |
|----|--|---------|

This report examines the merits and challenges of daytime and evening committee meetings and seeks Members' views on (1) whether there should be any changes to the Borough Council's current start times for meetings; and (2) whether there should be a pre-determined end time introduced to ensure meetings conclude within a reasonable timeframe, which lessens the impact on Councillors' and Officers' work schedules and personal lives.

Matters for Recommendation to the Cabinet

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|----|--|---------|
| 8. | Annual Service Delivery Plan Quarter 4 (2025/26) Reporting | 35 - 64 |
|----|--|---------|

This covering report and annex provides data on the performance of the Council during Quarter 4 of 2025/26 in relation to the milestones and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) set out in the Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025/26.

Matters for Information

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|----------|
| 9. | External Specialist Support 2025/26 | 65 - 102 |
|----|-------------------------------------|----------|

This report provides information on the spend and use of external expertise by the Council during 2025/26.

10. UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme 2025/26 103 - 122

This report provides information about the recently completed UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Programme in Tonbridge and Malling, setting out the positive impact on local residents and businesses of the various projects that have been supported.

11. Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman - Annual Review Letter 123 - 132

The annual report of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman regarding complaints received and dealt with by them over the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 is presented for information.

12. Record of Decisions taken by the Executive 133 - 136

A record of decisions taken by the Cabinet and/or Cabinet Members since the last meeting of the Committee is attached for information.

13. Notice of Forthcoming Key Decisions 137 - 148

The Notices of Key Decisions anticipated to be taken during the period June to September 2026 are attached. This may be subject to change due to adjustments to the reporting timetable.

14. Work Programme 149 - 152

The Work Programme setting out matters to be scrutinised during 2026/27 is attached for information. Members can suggest future items by liaising with the Chair of the Committee.

15. Urgent Items 153 - 154

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent due to special circumstances and of which notice has been given to the Chief Executive.

Matters for consideration in Private

16. Exclusion of Press and Public 155 - 156

The Chairman to move that the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting during consideration of any items the publication of which would disclose exempt information.

PART 2 - PRIVATE

17. Urgent Items 157 - 158

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent due to special circumstances and of which notice has been given to the Chief Executive.

MEMBERSHIP

Cllr Mrs A S Oakley (Chair)
Cllr L Athwal (Vice-Chair) and Cllr K B Tanner (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Mrs S Bell
Cllr T Bishop
Cllr C Brown
Cllr R I B Cannon
Cllr L Chapman
Cllr A Cope
Cllr P M Hickmott

Cllr M A J Hood
Cllr F A Hoskins
Cllr S A Hudson
Cllr D W King
Cllr A McDermott
Cllr W E Palmer
Cllr D Thornewell

GUIDANCE ON HOW MEETINGS WILL BE CONDUCTED

- (1) Most of the Borough Council meetings are livestreamed, unless there is exempt or confidential business being discussed, giving residents the opportunity to see decision making in action. These can be watched via our YouTube channel. When it is not possible to livestream meetings they are recorded and uploaded as soon as possible:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPp-IJISNgoF-ugSzxjAPfw/featured>

- (2) There are no fire drills planned during the time a meeting is being held. For the benefit of those in the meeting room, the fire alarm is a long continuous bell and the exits are via the doors used to enter the room. An officer on site will lead any evacuation.
- (3) Should you need this agenda or any of the reports in a different format, or have any other queries concerning the meeting, please contact Democratic Services on committee.services@tmbc.gov.uk in the first instance.

Attendance:

- Members of the Committee are required to attend in person and be present in the meeting room. Only these Members are able to move/ second or amend motions, and vote.
- Other Members of the Council can join via MS Teams and can take part in any discussion and ask questions, when invited to do so by the Chair, but cannot move/ second or amend motions or vote on any matters. Members participating remotely are reminded that this does not count towards their formal committee attendance.
- Occasionally, Members of the Committee are unable to attend in person and may join via MS Teams in the same way as other Members. However, they are unable to move/ second or amend motions or vote on any matters if they are not present in the meeting room. As with other Members joining via MS Teams, this does not count towards their formal committee attendance.
- Officers can participate in person or online.

- Members of the public addressing an Area Planning Committee should attend in person. However, arrangements to participate online can be considered in certain circumstances. Please contact committee.services@tmbc.gov.uk for further information.

Before formal proceedings start there will be a sound check of Members/Officers in the room. This is done as a roll call and confirms attendance of voting Members.

Ground Rules:

The meeting will operate under the following ground rules:

- Members in the Chamber should indicate to speak in the usual way and use the fixed microphones in front of them. These need to be switched on when speaking or comments will not be heard by those participating online. Please switch off microphones when not speaking.
- If there any technical issues the meeting will be adjourned to try and rectify them. If this is not possible there are a number of options that can be taken to enable the meeting to continue. These will be explained if it becomes necessary.

For those Members participating online:

- please request to speak using the 'chat or hand raised function';
- please turn off cameras and microphones when not speaking;
- please do not use the 'chat function' for other matters as comments can be seen by all;
- Members may wish to blur the background on their camera using the facility on Microsoft teams.
- Please avoid distractions and general chat if not addressing the meeting
- Please remember to turn off or silence mobile phones

Voting:

Voting may be undertaken by way of a roll call and each Member should verbally respond For, Against, Abstain. The vote will be noted and announced by the Democratic Services Officer.

Alternatively, votes may be taken by general affirmation if it seems that there is agreement amongst Members. The Chairman will announce the outcome of the vote for those participating and viewing online.

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee					
	Conservative	Liberal Democratic	Green	Ind. Kent Alliance	Labour
1	Dave Davis	Bill Banks	Kath Barton		Angus Bennison
2	James Lark	Paul Boxall	Steve Crisp		
3	Mark Rhodes	Garry Bridge	Robert Oliver		
4	Keith Tunstall	Trudy Dean	Bethan Parry		
5	Colin Williams	Roger Roud	Stacey Pilgrim		
Members of Cabinet cannot be appointed as a substitute to this Committee					

Updated May 2026

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Declarations of interest

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TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Thursday, 23rd April, 2026

Present: Cllr Mrs A S Oakley (Chair), Cllr L Athwal (Vice-Chair), Cllr K B Tanner (Vice-Chair), Cllr Mrs S Bell, Cllr T Bishop, Cllr C Brown, Cllr P M Hickmott, Cllr M A J Hood, Cllr F A Hoskins, Cllr D Thornewell, Cllr D A S Davis (substitute), Cllr S Pilgrim (substitute), Cllr M R Rhodes (substitute) and Cllr K S Tunstall (substitute)

In attendance: Councillors B Banks, A G Bennison, R P Betts, M D Boughton*, Mrs M Tatton* and M Taylor* were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

(*participated via MS Teams)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R I B Cannon, L Chapman, A Cope, S A Hudson, D W King, A McDermott and W E Palmer*

(*participated via MS Teams)

PART 1 - PUBLIC

OS 26/13 NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Notification of substitute members were recorded as set out below:

- Councillor S Pilgrim substituted for Councillor A Cope
- Councillor K Tunstall substituted for Councillor S Hudson
- Councillor D Davis substituted for Councillor D King
- Councillor M Rhodes substituted for Councillor A McDermott

In accordance with Council Procedure Rules 17.5 to 17.9 these Councillors had the same rights as the ordinary member of the committee for whom they were substituting.

OS 26/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors T Bishop and K Tunstall declared an Other Significant Interest in 'New Angel Leisure Centre – Financial Review' (Agenda Item 16) as they were Borough Council appointees to the Tonbridge and Malling Leisure Trust. They withdrew from the meeting during consideration of the item and took no part in the discussion and voting.

For reasons of transparency, Councillor L Athwal indicated that in relation to 'New Angel Leisure Centre – Financial Review' (Agenda Item 16) she was on the Payroll undertaking part-time coaching for the Tonbridge and Malling Leisure Trust. However, as Councillor Athwal did not consider this to represent either a Disclosable Pecuniary or Other Significant Interest in the item, she did not withdraw from the meeting.

OS 26/15 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 22 January 2026 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

OS 26/16 OUTSIDE BODY UPDATE - KENT COUNTY COUNCIL HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

An update was provided by Councillor K Tanner, as the Borough Council's appointee to the Kent County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny, on recent activities of the organisation, including work being undertaken in response to the National Health Service ten-year plan and associated cost saving targets.

Reference was made to governance changes involving the West Kent Health and Care Partnership integrating into the Kent and Medway partnership with a view to achieving synergies and savings.

It was also reported that the Health Action Team had received additional funding and that local organisations would have an opportunity to bid for funding to deliver projects supporting priority groups.

With regard to the Borough Council's One You Service, Members were pleased to note that the Kent County Council would continue to fund the service, which provided a broad range of support services to residents, including those with addictions, weight loss needs, and housing or benefits queries.

Finally, it was noted that discussion continued nationally on a range of health service changes, including children's cancer care services.

MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET

OS 26/17 SECTION 106 PROCESSES AND CONSIDERATIONS

The report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Regulatory Services provided the Committee with an overview of the current approach to the management and monitoring of section 106 (s106) funding and proposed process improvements.

A proposed set of Terms of Reference for the s106 Strategic Monitoring Group was attached at Annex 1, a set of Terms of Reference for the

Officer Monitoring Group at Annex 2, and a breakdown detailing the spend on projects relating to contributions held by the Borough Council and how these had been distributed and allocated were attached at Annex 3.

An explanation was provided on the monitoring approach, including the role of the external legal adviser, the use of a pro forma agreement, and the revised monitoring process intended to improve oversight and progress tracking. Reference was made to Parish Infrastructure Statements and the timetable for review, together with work underway to develop a Tonbridge Infrastructure Statement. It was also reported that a further update would be provided to the Committee in due course on the delivery status of various health infrastructure projects with s106 funding associated, given the impact that organisational changes across the county had on project delivery timescales.

In discussion, while recognising the success of utilising s106 contributions to assist the delivery of a significant number of local infrastructures, Members raised issues including clarity over health-related contributions, time limits on contribution spends, cumulative impacts of phased or multiple developments, and the relationship between health commissioning arrangements and delivery of primary care infrastructure. It was explained that the Borough Council was not a Community Infrastructure Levy charging authority and that s106 contributions were a funding collection mechanism rather than a delivery mechanism. However, officer engagement with partner bodies was ongoing to support delivery.

Furthermore, Members discussed parish engagement and communication, including the updating of Parish Infrastructure Statements and the practicalities of obtaining updated cost information. It was noted that consideration was being given to a more flexible approach with a view to improving engagement with parishes, subject to identification of a clear and sustainable operational process. Members also raised concerns regarding bus-related contributions, the sufficiency of funding, and the time taken to progress variation agreements, and noted the responsibility for legal work and constraints on the use of contribution funds to meet legal fees.

Overall, Members acknowledged the improvements in the availability and clarity of section 106 data for monitoring group members and supported the suggestion to align wider data reporting with scrutiny committee cycles going forward.

On the grounds of supporting an improved s106 monitoring process, Councillor T Bishop proposed, Councillor L Athwal seconded, and the Committee

RECOMMENDED*: That

- (1) the information provided in this report, including the next steps proposed for developing the Borough Council's approach to section 106 obligations as set out at Section 11 of the report, be noted; and
- (2) the proposed Terms of Reference for the Member and Officer Monitoring Groups, attached at Annex 1 and Annex 2 respectively, be endorsed and commended to Cabinet for adoption.

***Recommended to Cabinet**

**OS 26/18 ANNUAL SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN QUARTER 3 (2025/26)
REPORTING**

Consideration was given to a quarterly update on the Annual Service Delivery Plan, providing data on performance during Quarter 3 of 2025/26 in relation to milestones and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), as set out in Annex 1. It was reported that 71% of the key activities were rated Green at the end of Quarter 3 and that 66% of the KPIs were rated Green, with highlights set out in 5.3 and 6.4 of the covering report.

During discussion, Members raised issues including the measurement of some KPIs as outputs rather than outcomes, clarification of annual carbon audit data and reporting frequency, and ongoing concerns regarding fly-tipping and the interpretation of reported incidents. In response an explanation was provided regarding a significant rise of organised criminal activity reported recently and the distinction between commercial and domestic fly-tipping, alongside comments on bulky waste collection arrangements and possible approaches to education and enforcement.

In addition, Members also noted positive progress made in relation to clearance of the housing register application backlog, empty homes work including the intended use of case studies to illustrate the complexity of bringing empty properties back into use, temporary accommodation levels, and the historic backlog in relation to Tree Preservation Order applications.

Councillor S Pilgrim proposed, Councillor F Hoskins seconded, and the Committee

RECOMMENDED*: That

- (1) the overall progress, including achievements to date and areas needing focus, as detailed in the report and the attached Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025/26 Quarter 3 update, be recorded.

***Recommended to Cabinet**

MATTERS FOR INFORMATION**OS 26/19 PROPERTY OWNED AND RENTED OUT BY TMBC**

The report of the Director of Central Services and Deputy Chief Executive set out the properties owned and rented out by the Borough Council, including information on annual rental income, asset valuations and maintenance costs.

The total income currently generated from the Council's rented properties was reported as over £502,000 per annum, with an additional income from rental increase of around £350,000 over the previous four years. Members welcomed the presentation of a full list of rented properties.

With regard to information on land holdings not included within the report, in particular land without buildings, Members noted that a full list of land holdings was available on the Council's website. Additionally, work was ongoing to identify potential sites for the purposes of delivering Biodiversity Net Gain.

OS 26/20 RECORD OF DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE EXECUTIVE

The decisions taken by the Cabinet and Cabinet Members during the period February to April 2026 were presented for information and noted by the Committee.

OS 26/21 NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING KEY DECISIONS

The Notice setting out Key Decisions anticipated to be taken during the period April to June 2026 was noted.

OS 26/22 WORK PROGRAMME

The Work Programme setting out potential matters to be scrutinised during 2026 was noted. Members were invited to suggest future items by liaising with the Chair of the Committee.

An additional item on 'Annual Review of Use of Consultants' was identified to be added to the agenda for the next Committee meeting scheduled for 25 June 2026.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE**OS 26/23 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Chairman moved, it was seconded and

RESOLVED: That as public discussion would disclose exempt information, the following matters be considered in private.

PART 2 - PRIVATE**MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET****OS 26/24 NEW ANGEL LEISURE CENTRE - FINANCIAL REVIEW**

(Reason: Part 2 Private: LGA 1972 - Sch 12A Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information))

The report of the Director of Street Scene, Leisure and Technical Services considered the potential financing arrangements of the new Angel Leisure Centre facility.

Members received an update on progress, including current cost information and the approach to refining figures through the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) stages, recognising the importance of securing a viable and high-quality facility for residents. It was reported that work was ongoing to minimise any borrowing requirement.

Information was provided on borrowing considerations, including reference to Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) requirements and the need to demonstrate a feasible and realistic repayment approach. It was noted that the intention was to present Members with further updated information at full Council in October 2026, including alternative options and associated costs, thereby facilitating an informed decision by Members.

Questions were raised regarding potential future asset disposal and the factors affecting valuation, including planning considerations and site constraints, were explained, with reference made to the implications of the Local Government Reorganisation and associated timing.

On the grounds of supporting minimising borrowing and ensuring Members were kept informed through regular updates and were able to maintain effective oversight throughout future stages given the strategic significance of the project, the Committee

RECOMMENDED*: That

- (1) Officers continue to work to minimise the requirement for borrowing as part of their preparations for the submission of final project details to full Council on 20 October 2026 and thereafter;
- (2) monthly updates be provided to all Members of the Borough Council on project progress ahead of full Council on 20 October 2026, together with an all-Member briefing on 22 July 2026; and
- (3) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee maintain oversight of the future stages of the project and receive an update report on the

progress at future meetings following full Council on 20 October 2026.

***Recommended to Cabinet**

The meeting ended at 9.53 pm
with a break between 9.05 pm and 9.10 pm

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Agenda Item 6

Any Executive Decisions which have been “called in”

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

25 June 2026

Part 1 - Public

Recommendation to Council



Cabinet Member	Councillor Matt Boughton, Leader
Responsible Officer	Adrian Stanfield, Director of Central Services and Deputy Chief Executive; and Joy Ukadike, Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Report Author	Allison Parris, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Review of Rules for Convening Meetings

1 Summary and Purpose of Report

1.1 Members are asked to consider:

- whether there should be any changes to the Borough Council's current start times for meetings; and
- whether there should be a pre-determined end time introduced to ensure meetings conclude within a reasonable timeframe, which lessens the impact on Councillors and Officers work schedules and personal lives.

1.2 This report examines the merits and challenges of daytime and evening committee meetings and provides a comparative overview of meeting start times across neighbouring authorities in West and wider Kent.

1.3 Data was compiled with assistance from AI based on published agendas, calendars and meeting practice. This data has been manually checked for accuracy.

1.4 Published Constitutions were reviewed in respect of meeting durations and finish times.

2 Corporate Strategy Priority Area

2.1 Efficient services for all our residents, maintaining an effective council.

2.2 A review of the rules for convening meetings will ensure efficient management of Council agendas in a timely manner, support effective decision making, improve

the accessibility of meetings for members of the public and support health and safety considerations for staff, Members and the public.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 Members are asked to consider whether to introduce an earlier start time (to be recommended by the Committee) for all evening meetings of the Borough Council;
- 3.2 If an earlier start-time is recommended under 3.1, consider whether this should be subject to a trial period;
- 3.3 Retain the ability to agree a start time earlier than as agreed in 3.1 in exceptional circumstances, on a case-by-case basis, and in consultation with the relevant Chair;
- 3.4 Members are asked to consider whether there should be a cut off time by which all evening meetings of the Borough Council should finish and recommend to Council that the Constitution be amended accordingly; and
- 3.5 Members are asked to consider whether a vote should be taken to extend the meeting for a further 30 minutes to conclude the matter already under discussion if a pre-determined end time is introduced and recommend to Council that the Constitution be amended accordingly.

4 Introduction and Background

- 4.1 As a result of recent high profile late finishing meetings, concerns were raised that lengthy discussions were not necessarily an efficient use of time for both Councillors and Officers.

The following meetings have finished after 2200 hours during 2024/25 and 2025/26:

- Area 2 Planning Committee – 21 February 2024 (finished at 2210 hours);
- Extraordinary Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 22 April 2024 (finished at 2300 hours);
- Area 2 Planning Committee – 18 September 2024 (finished at 2242 hours);
- Finance, Regeneration and Property Scrutiny Select Committee – 19 November 2024 (finished at 2200 hours);
- Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee – 3 December 2024 (finished at 2200 hours, having started at 1850 hours);
- Area 2 Planning Committee – 4 December 2024 (finished at 2203 hours, having started at 1830 hours);
- Area 2 Planning Committee – 15 January 2025 (finished at 2305 hours, having started at 1830 hours);
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 23 January 2025 (finished at 2235 hours);

- Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee – 12 February 2025 (finished at 2200 hours);
- Council – 18 February 2025 (finished at 2340 hours);
- Area 2 Planning Committee – 2 April 2025 (finished at 2212 hours);
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 3 April 2025 (finished at 2230 hours);
- Council – 8 April 2025 (finished at 2342 hours);
- Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee – 20 May 2025 (finished at 2221 hours);
- Parish Partnership Panel – 29 May 2025 (finished at 2210 hours);
- Council – 8 July 2025 (finished at 2305 hours);
- Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee – 15 July 2025 (finished at 2230 hours);
- Area 3 Planning Committee – 29 January 2026 (finished at 2208 hours);
- Area 2 Planning Committee – 18 February 2026 (finished at 2349 hours);
- Area 3 and Area 2 Planning Committees – 9 March 2026 – (finished at 2317 hours, with Area 3 having started at 1730 hours); and
- Council – 12 May 2026 (finished at 2203 hours).

4.2 In summary, the statistics identify 21 meetings between February 2024 and May 2026 that finished at or after 10.00pm. The latest recorded finish was 11.49pm for Area 2 Planning Committee on 18 February 2026, followed by Council on 8 April 2025 at 11.42pm and Council on 18 February 2025 at 11.40pm. Late finishes were not isolated to one committee, although Area 2 Planning Committee and Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee featured most frequently.

4.3 There were also concerns raised in respect of the health and safety of Members and Officers impacted by late-running meetings particularly where they were expected to attend work the following day.

4.4 There are a number of considerations that arise in relation to meeting start and end times. For example, meeting times may clash with full time employment responsibilities for Members or those with caring responsibilities outside of normal working hours. Many members also serve on other bodies, e.g. county council/ parish or town councils, and therefore need to attend meetings of those bodies in the evening as well as meet with residents as part of their representative role.

4.5 Changing the starting time for a meeting would not necessarily shorten the length of meetings. However, it might mean that business was concluded earlier in the evening, thereby reducing the risks that arise from meetings extending late into the evening.

5 Comparative Data

5.1 A summary of meeting start times across Kent are detailed in **Annex 1**.

5.2 This illustrates that Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council is one of only two councils starting meetings at 7.30pm.

6 Proposal

6.1 Having regard to the comparative position of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council within West Kent, the following options are presented for discussion:

- 1) The current meeting start time of 7.30pm is later than most other Kent authorities and represents the latest routine evening start time within the West Kent area. Therefore, should the Borough Council consider an earlier start time for all committee meetings to provide sufficient time to discuss matters of business fully whilst ensuring reasonable finish times and retaining an evening-based approach;
- 2) If Members wish to explore alternative start times, should a time-limited pilot be considered to enable feedback to be sought from Members, Officers and the public before any permanent changes are made;
- 3) Is there any merit in introducing a specific pre-determined time by which meetings should be finished; and
- 4) If a specific pre-determined end time is introduced should Members have the ability to vote to extend the meeting for a further 30 minutes to conclude the matter already under discussion.

6.2 Any review of meeting start/finish times should reflect Member availability, public attendance and operational impacts for Officers.

6.3 The option to start meetings earlier than any standard start time agreed by Members could be considered in exceptional circumstances, on a case-by-case basis, and in consultation with the relevant Chair.

7 Merits and Challenges

7.1 Evening meetings

7.1.1 These are often an opportunity for those in full time employment to stand for elected office as individuals can only realistically participate in committee meetings outside of their normal working hours, unless they use annual leave or other flexible working arrangements.

7.1.2 This is important because councils gain significant advantages from inclusive representation that mirrors the diversity of their communities, including individuals of working age who are employed.

7.1.3 If membership becomes restricted to those who are retired, independently wealthy or able to negotiate leave from employment, there is a risk that councils become unrepresentative. Evening meetings enable a wider cross section of the

community to consider standing for election which strengthens the quality of democratic debate and decision making and removes visible barriers to participation.

7.1.4 Evening meetings support greater public involvement and attendance and allow Members to fulfil their democratic duties without compromising their professional careers.

7.1.5 Individuals with caring responsibilities during the day may find that evening meetings are more suitable, as they often coincide with times when partners or family members can provide alternative childcare or support.

7.2 Daytime meetings

7.2.1 These enable Councillors to integrate their formal committee responsibilities with other related demands, including other meetings and briefings.

7.2.2 Members can seek clarification of technical points and explore options when Officers are present during working hours. This informal dialogue underpins effective member-officer relations and can produce better-informed decision-making.

7.2.3 For those in employment, evening meetings can mean long working days.

7.2.4 Daytime meetings may better serve other groups currently underrepresented, such as parents with school-age children or those with evening caring responsibilities.

7.2.5 Self-employed people, freelancers and small business owners may also find daytime meetings easier to accommodate than employees of an organisation.

8 Other Considerations

8.1 Both daytime and evening meetings create barriers for different groups.

8.2 The majority of Borough Council meetings operate as a hybrid which makes them easier to access at short notice. However, Members do need to be present in person at meetings to retain their voting rights.

8.3 The majority of Borough Council meetings are available on YouTube which enables the public to watch at any time.

8.4 There could also be an additional pressure for those Members representing parishes when attending both Borough Council and Parish/Town Council meetings in the evening.

8.5 As well as committee meetings and parish/town council meetings, Members are expected to attend other briefing and training sessions. These often arise without

notice and are, therefore, not planned for at the start of the municipal year. This further creates pressure on Councillors time commitments.

9 Key Benefits of a Pre-determined end time

- 9.1 In accordance with their Constitutions, Maidstone Borough Council, Sevenoaks District Council and Gravesham Borough Council have a 10.30 pm deadline for their meetings to finish.
- 9.1.1 Maidstone Borough Council advises that ‘Each unfinished meeting will adjourn at 10.30pm unless a majority of Members present vote to extend the meeting to 11.00pm at which time the meeting will stand adjourned’; and ‘The time and date of the continuation of the adjourned meeting will be decided by a majority of those Members present, or if no decision is reached, by the Proper Officer in consultation with the Mayor and Leader, and it should normally take place within ten (10) working days of the meeting’.
- 9.1.2 Sevenoaks District Council advises that ‘Unless the majority of Members present vote for the meeting to continue, any meeting that extends to 10.30pm will adjourn immediately. Remaining business will be considered at a time and date fixed by the Chairman at the meeting. If the Chairman does not fix a date, the remaining business will be considered at the next ordinary meeting’.
- 9.1.3 Gravesham Borough Council advises ‘that where a Full Council meeting is still in progress after 3 hours or at 10.30pm (whichever is the earlier time) the Mayor will at the first convenient opportunity, draw attention to the time; specify any remaining business which is of such a nature as to justify an adjournment or extension of the meeting; and with the exception of any business so specified, all motions, questions and business remaining to be dealt with shall be deemed to have been moved and seconded and shall be put to the vote in immediate succession and without discussion’.
- 9.2 In accordance with their Constitution, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council advises ‘that an ordinary meeting of the Council, when 4 hours have elapsed after the commencement of the meeting, the Mayor shall put to the vote whether the meeting should continue. If it is agreed not to continue then the remaining items on the agenda will be adjourned to the next meeting.’
- 9.3 In accordance with their Constitution, Thanet Borough Council advises that ‘Unless it is resolved to complete the item under discussion, meetings shall stand adjourned at 10.30pm unless in the opinion of a majority of the Members thereof the business remaining to be dealt with can be concluded by 11.30pm in which case the meeting may continue until 11.30pm at which time it shall automatically stand adjourned.’
- 9.4 A number of benefits could potentially be achieved for the introduction of a pre-determined end time (guillotine) and these are outlined below:

- 1) **Time Management:** It guarantees that meetings end by a specific, pre-determined time, which is particularly beneficial for Councillors/Officers who have to return to work the following morning and who may have lengthy journeys home if they do not live locally.
- 2) **Prioritisation of Business:** By imposing a time limit, the guillotine procedure prioritises the most important and urgent items for decision-making and retains effectiveness.
- 3) **Efficiency:** It incentivises the efficient use of time and can lead to more focused debates.
- 4) **Clarity of Procedure:** Having a clear set of rules for the guillotine helps manage expectations and standardise meeting procedures, which can reduce arguments about process or "points of order".

10 Other Options

- 10.1 Remain with the current convention of starting meetings at 7.30pm and do not implement a pre-determined end time.

11 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 11.1 There would be no additional financial and value for money considerations arising out of amending start or finish times of meetings.
- 11.2 The Borough Council must ensure compliance with the Working Time Regulations 1998 including limits on total hours worked and minimum rest periods for staff.

12 Risk Assessment

- 12.1 An earlier start time might preclude some Members from attending. However, this should be balanced with a later finish time impacting those who need to attend work the next day.

13 Legal Implications

- 13.1 There are certain rules for convening meetings that the Borough Council must follow such as giving notice to the public of the time and place of any meeting.
- 13.2 However, it is up to the local authority to set their own rules and processes for the management of meetings.

14 Consultation and Communications

- 14.1 Discussion with Members via the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and regular reporting in advance of any changes to meeting procedures and consequential changes to the Constitution.

15 Implementation

15.1 Any proposed changes to meeting start/finish times could be implemented upon the consequential changes to the Constitution being approved by Council.

16 Cross Cutting Issues

16.1 Climate Change and Biodiversity

16.1.1 Limited or low impact on emissions and environment.

16.1.2 Climate change advice has not been sought in the preparation of the options and recommendations in this report.

16.1.3 Climate change and biodiversity have not been considered as part of this report as proposals relate to current operational matters.

16.2 Equalities and Diversity

16.2.1 Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to:

- (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups; and
- (iii) foster good relations between people from different groups. The decisions recommended through this paper directly impact on end users.

16.2.2 The impact has been analysed and varies between groups of people.

16.2.3 The results of this analysis are set out immediately below:

- Earlier start times may disproportionately affect some people more than others such as those with young children or other caring responsibilities;
- Support routines may be affected by earlier start times;
- Earlier finish times may improve health and wellbeing.

16.2.4 The impacts identified in the Equality Impact Assessment can be mitigated through a combination of improved consistency, accessible meeting arrangements and ongoing monitoring.

16.2.5 Key actions include:

- Setting clear and consistent start and finish times, including use of a guillotine, to support caring responsibilities, disability-related needs and safe travel.

- Providing early notice of meeting dates and any changes to help Members and officers plan care, travel and support arrangements.
- Enabling access through hybrid/remote options where lawful, alongside ensuring physical accessibility, breaks and suitable facilities for those with disabilities or pregnancy-related needs.
- Monitoring attendance and feedback across protected groups and reviewing impacts after an initial pilot period.

16.2.6 These measures collectively ensure that any disproportionate impacts are identified, mitigated and kept under review while maintaining inclusive decision-making.

16.3 Other If Relevant

- Health and Safety
- Healthy Lifestyles

16.3.1 The timing and duration of Council and Committee meetings have a direct impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of both Members and Officers. Recent late-finishing meetings have raised concerns regarding tiredness, particularly where individuals are expected to attend work the following day or have lengthy journeys home.

16.3.2 Ensuring that meetings conclude at a reasonable hour helps to minimise the risks associated with tiredness, including impaired concentration, reduced decision-making capacity and the potential for unsafe travel home.

16.3.3 Introducing an earlier start time and/or a pre-determined end time would also support improved work–life balance and contribute positively to overall wellbeing.

16.3.4 Establishing clearer expectations regarding meeting length provides predictability, reduces stress, and enables Members and Officers to manage professional and personal commitments more safely and effectively.

Background Papers	N/A
Annex 1	Comparative data

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Comparative Data		
A summary of meeting start times across Kent are detailed below:		
Name	Start Times	Overall Approach
Ashford Borough Council	1800-1900	Evening (Licensing and Regulatory Committees scheduled for daytime)
Canterbury	1900	Evening (Licensing and Appointment Committees scheduled for daytime)
Dartford Borough Council	1900	Evening
Dover District Council	1800	Evening (Licensing and Regulatory Committees scheduled for daytime)
Folkestone & Hythe District Council		Mixed
Gravesham Borough Council	1930	Evening
Kent County Council	0930-1000	Daytime
Maidstone Borough Council	1800-1830	Mixed*
Medway Council	1800; 1830; 1930	Evening
Sevenoaks District Council	1900	Evening
Thanet District Council	1900	Evening
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	1930	Evening (Licensing Sub-Committees scheduled for daytime)
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	1800-1830	Evening

*Cabinet is generally scheduled for daytime

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

25 June 2026

Part 1 - Public

Recommendation to Cabinet



Cabinet Member	Cllr Matt Boughton, Leader
Responsible Officer	Damian Roberts, Chief Executive
Report Author	Gill Fox, Corporate Policy & Communities Manager

Annual Service Delivery Plan Q4 (2025/26) reporting

1 Summary and Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This covering report and annex provides data on the performance of the Council during Quarter 4 of 2025/26 in relation to the milestones and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) set out in the Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025/26.

2 Corporate Strategy Priority Area

- 2.1 This report covers all four of the priorities set out in the Corporate Strategy 2023-2027 – Caring for the Environment; Improving Housing and Protecting Areas; Investing in our Borough and Local Economy; and Efficient and Effective Council.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 That overall progress, including achievements to date and areas needing focus, **BE RECORDED.**

4 Introduction and Background

- 4.1 The Q4 report and Annex 1 provide information on key activity and KPI's in the Annual Service Delivery Plan. As this is the final quarterly report for 2025/26, it also marks the conclusion of the first Annual Service Delivery Plan reporting cycle. This is therefore an appropriate point to take stock not only of Quarter 4 performance, but of the progress made over the year as a whole and the benefits of embedding this approach to corporate performance monitoring.
- 4.2 The Annual Service Delivery Plan has proved valuable in bringing together key activities and indicators within a single framework, supporting greater transparency, accountability and focus on delivery. It has enabled progress and challenges to be tracked more consistently throughout the year, while also providing clearer evidence base for reporting achievements and identifying areas

for improvement across each of the Council's priority areas. The breakdown of these activities and KPIs is divided up by the Corporate Strategy Priority Areas as follows:

Corporate Strategy Priority Area	Activities	KPIs
Caring for the Environment	15	14
Improving Housing and Protecting Areas	7	15
Investing in our Borough and Local Economy	15	10
Efficient and Effective Council	33	23
Total	70	62

5 Overview of Performance for Key Activities in Q4 (2025/26)

5.1 Whilst the detail is provided in Annex 1, the following table provides an overview of performance relating to the key activities in the Annual Service Delivery Plan for the period up to the end of March 2026.

Corporate Strategy Priority Area	Red	Amber	Green	Project removed	Total
Caring for the Environment	0	3	12	0	15
Improving Housing and Protecting Areas	0	3	4	0	7
Investing in our Borough and Local Economy	2	5	7	1	15
Efficient and Effective Council	3	9	21	0	33
Total	5	20	44	1	70

5.2 The RAG rating of these activities is based on the following definitions:

1. **Red** – serious issues with dates being missed.
2. **Amber** – some issues that are being managed with a need for close monitoring.
3. **Green** – project is on track (with tick where completed).

5.3 A total of 44 activities (63%) were green rated as of the end of Q4, which represents a strong level of performance. (Green ratings have only been allocated where the entire activity is complete e.g. if an activity has multiple goals, with 4 out of the 5 green rated, but 1 area remains amber – the entire activity has been rated amber). Some highlights include:

Caring for the Environment

- Work to progress the decarbonisation of Gibson West is progressing as planned
- The procurement of all contracted waste and recycling services have progressed as planned, with reports agreed at relevant committees
- Investments at Tonbridge Racecourse Sportsground have completed with facilities in use by the public
- The condition of playing pitches for sports clubs at Swanmead sportsground have been improved and works completed.

Improving Housing and Protecting Areas

- A refreshed approach to Local Lettings Plans for new homes was presented to members
- Greater protection for people in rented accommodation has been considered with a report on the Renters Rights Act presented to members

Investing in our Borough and Local Economy

- A successful marketing campaign was delivered to help drive visitor numbers to Tonbridge Castle through events and activities
- A new Street Trading Policy has been implemented to enhance towns and maximise community benefit
- The People and Skills Grant Scheme, creating training and employment opportunities for residents has been delivered

Efficient and Effective Council

- Actions to ensure the Council maximises the opportunities to influence the implementation of the Governments Devolution/Local Government Reorganisation have all been completed
- The Medium-Term Financial Strategy has been refreshed and reported as part of the budget setting process
- All 2025/26 Household Support Fund has been allocated in accordance with funding criteria, to support the most vulnerable residents

- 5.4 Overall, only 5 activities (7%) are red rated. These relate to gateway services; red rated due to ongoing project work to assess the viability of a café, with a report scheduled for Members in July 2026. The digital information boards are red rated as locations across the borough have not yet been completed – this is now carried forward into the 2026/27 ASDP with an update report already scheduled for Finance, Regeneration and Property Scrutiny Select Committee. Planning fee structures is also incomplete, but this is due to delays with Government legislation. Automatic number plate recognition for car parks has been delayed until 2026/27 financial year due to resourcing challenges as has the action to transfer planning calls to the contact centre. Whilst these projects have been delayed, the commitment to deliver them in the coming months has been agreed.

6 Overview of Key Performance Indicators in Q4 (2025/26)

6.1 The following table sets out an overview of the status of the Key Performance Indicators within the Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025/26 as at the end of Q4 (end of March 2026):

Corporate Strategy Priority Area	KPI Status				Total
	Red	Amber	Green	N/A	
Caring for the Environment	4	1	9	0	14
Improving Housing and Protecting Areas	4	1	10	0	15
Investing in our Borough and Local Economy	2	1	6	1	10
Efficient and Effective Council	2	6	15	0	23
Total	12	9	40	1	62

6.2 The definitions for the RAG-rating of the status are as follows:

- **Red** – indicator is below 10% variance of the target
- **Amber** – indicator is within 10% variance of the target.
- **Green** – indicator is on track or exceeding the target.

In Annex 1, the trend is also included for each Key Performance Indicator. The symbols indicate the following:

- ↑ - improving trend
- ↔ - static trend
- ↓ - worsening trend

6.3 Of the KPIs that are rated, 65% (40 Out of 62) are green rated, which represents a good level of progress at the end of the year. Some highlights in Q4 include:

- Above target for prompt payment of invoices
- Reduction in the number of days to determine council tax reduction scheme claims
- Above target for number of residents benefiting from projects undertaken using the People and Skills Fund
- Reduction in the number of households in temporary accommodation
- Increase in the number of affordable homes built
- 100% waste collection completions

6.4 Overall, 12 KPIs (19%) are red rated, these include:

- KPI 001 - Annual Carbon Audit Emissions Data –annual data, no further updates for Q3 and Q4. The next carbon audit will take place by Q2 of 2026/27 ASDP. Decarbonisation progress will be restricted by the fact that the Government is no longer offering financial support through the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.
- KPI 009 - Waste collection complaints – target set at 160 complaints. This is an exceptionally low target given the number of properties receiving waste collections (the team collect either refuse or recycling, plus food waste from around 57,000 properties every week, which equates to approximately 5,928,000 per year – a target of just 160 complaints would be 0.003%). Numbers are therefore very low compared to actual service demand and operational activity.
- KPI 010 - Street collection complaints – as above, the target was just 20, which again is unrealistically low.
- KPI 012 - Fly tipping – there is a Kent wide increase in fly tip reports. TMBC is generally one of the lowest three or four councils for numbers of incidents reported. Officers continue to work with contractors to respond accordingly.
- KPI 015 - 5-year housing land supply – supply has been at 2.89 years for over a year. The Council recently published the 2024-2025 Authority Monitoring Report and are soon to publish the Council's updated Housing Land supply position.
- KPI 022 - Number of people on housing register – The numbers on the Housing Register have reduced due to the change in allocations policy. It is currently red rated; however, this reflects the original target being set before the full scale of work required to update the Housing Register was understood. The review process has been successful in establishing a more accurate and robust register, providing a stronger foundation for future performance and reporting.
- KPI 024 - Number of households made a successful private rented sector (PRS) offer - accessing the PRS remains challenging however the move on officer has made progress in Q4 with 2 formal PRS offers, in addition a further 6 households were also assisted into the PRS but were not formal discharge of duty.
- KPI 026 - Number of empty properties – this is not easily influenced by the Council and a further KPI has been added in the 2026/27 plan to better reflect the work of the Empty Homes Officer.
- KPI 36 - Tonbridge castle income - castle closed for refurbishment – during budget setting, the revised estimate was adjusted to reflect this as the target became unachievable.
- KPI 37 - Tonbridge castle visitor numbers - castle closed for refurbishment – as above.

- KPI 046 - TMBC app downloads - target was set based on previous years, but a saturation point may have been reached, making this target unachievable due to expected mobile app attrition (churn).
- KPI 054 - Percentage of webchat handled by contact centre – challenges with software have caused chat to drop out. Solutions to resolve the issue within the current software are being explored.

7 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

7.1 As part of further aligning the ASDP with the budget setting process, consideration should be given in the 2026/27 plan to amending relevant targets where changes are made at the revised budget stage, to ensure that performance measures continue to reflect agreed resources and deliverable expectations. As this marks the end of the first Annual Service Delivery Plan cycle, there is also an opportunity to reflect on lessons learned and use these to further strengthen the approach for future years.

8 Risk Assessment

8.1 Performance Management is identified in the Strategic Risk Register which highlights that without an effective performance management framework in place (such as that provided by the Annual Service Delivery Plan), the authority will not be able to understand any required improvements or achieve value for money.

9 Legal Implications

9.1 The matters raised in this report are considered to be routine, uncontroversial or not legally complex and a legal opinion has not been sought on these proposals.

10 Consultation and Communications

10.1 This data is used by the Council to communicate, both internally and to the communities, about the Council's achievements as well as any areas of focus that the Council is working to improve.

11 Cross Cutting Issues

11.1 Climate Change and Biodiversity

11.1.1 The monitoring of the Annual Service Delivery Plan has a limited or low impact on emissions and environment, although there are measures within the plan which will have a more positive bearing on reducing carbon emissions and improving energy efficiency.

11.1.2 Climate change advice has not been sought in the preparation of the options and recommendations in this report.

11.2 Equalities and Diversity

11.2.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Background Papers	None
Annexes	Annex 1 – Annual Service Delivery Plan – Q4 - Jan 2026 – March 2026

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Annex 1: Annual Service Delivery Plan – Q4 Update

Caring for the Environment - Activity:

Ref	Description of activity	Priority Action(s)	Milestones	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Commentary
1.1	Install electric vehicle rapid charging points in the borough to support the reduction in carbon emissions from private transport.	Climate Change	Deliver 40 more electric vehicle rapid charging points in our car parks by March 2026.	Head of Technical Services	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	G	Rapid chargers have been installed and commissioned. A total of 56 have been installed and commissioned with a further 14 to be connected shortly. Delivery has extended target.
1.2	Install air source heat pumps to serve the fitness pool at Larkfield Leisure Centre to help meet our 2030 Climate Change goal.	Climate Change	Planning Application approved by Full Council by summer 2025 (if required).	Head of Administration and Property Services	Housing, Environment and Economy	G	Planning application not required.
			Works completed (including the removal of gas boilers) by March 2026.			A	Anticipated completion April 2026 due to delay in UKPN completing legal agreements.
1.3	Progress plans to decarbonise Tonbridge Pool heating system.	Climate Change	Preferred option agreed by Cabinet by November 2025.	Head of Administration and Property Services	Housing, Environment and Economy	A	Reported to FRPSSC on 17/02/2026 on proposed way forward.
1.4	Decarbonise Gibson offices and install renewable technology.	Climate Change	Report tender outcome to Members and award contract in June 2025. Removal of gas boilers and installation of solar PV completed by March 2026.	Head of Administration and Property Services	Housing, Environment and Economy	G	Completed tender outcome – reported to Cabinet 3 June 2025.
1.5	Assess relevant Council owned land as Biodiversity Net Gain sites for the borough.	Climate Change	Baselines established for Council owned land during summer 2025.	Head of Administration and Property Services / Climate Change Officer	Housing, Environment and Economy	G	Feasibility and implementation study completed October 2025.
			Report outcome to Members by autumn 2025.			A	Feasibility and implementation study being assessed by Green Infrastructure OSG
1.6	Evaluate use of Hydro-treated Vegetable Oil (HVO) for the waste contract vehicles.	Climate Change	Report setting out consideration of HVO proposals within the recommissioning of waste and recycling services to Members by December 2025.	Head of Street Scene and Leisure	Finance, Waste and Technical Services/Housing, Environment and Economy	G	Report considered by Scrutiny Select Committee and Cabinet and way forward agreed. Discussions will take place with successful contractor. Complete.
2.1	Undertake the full procurement of all contracted waste and recycling services.	Recycling	Issuing of tender documentation in May 2025	Head of Street Scene and Leisure	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	G	Tender documentation issued in May 2025. Complete.
			Tender evaluation undertaken in December 2025.				Tender evaluation progressed in partnership with TWBC complete
			Report to Cabinet to approve preferred contractor in Spring 2026.				Report to Cabinet and Report to Council 21 April - Complete

Ref	Description of activity	Priority Action(s)	Milestones	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Commentary
			Appointment of successful contractor in Spring 2026.				Approval gained, Contractor advised and initial mobilisation meeting scheduled 27 April - Complete
2.2	Drive up greater recycling rates within our communities.	Recycling	2 council-run events that encourage recycling by March 2026. 2 'behaviour-change' campaigns (including fly-tipping) delivered by end of March 2026.	Head of Communication	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	G	2 food recycling events completed – VE Day and Tonbridge Food Festival. Focus on food recycling campaign linked to 'No Food in Here' stickers being attached to all refuse bins.
2.3	Work with our contractors to minimise waste and remove single use plastics from their operations.	Recycling	Introduce greater use of refills and reduced waste from Council-owned sites by July 2025.	Climate Change Officer	Housing, Environment and Economy	G	Guidance note for event recycling was endorsed by CESSC in November 2025. Guidance note to be circulated to all event organisers in February 2026. Work undertaken by main contractor (TM Active) to reduce single use plastics. tactive have introduced food waste recycling in 2025 and have also reduced the provision of single-use plastic cups provided with tap water, resulting in an approx 45% reduction in drinking water plastic cup usage.
3.1	Improve our designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) to help support a better environment for our residents.	Tackling Pollution	Revocation of 4 Air Quality Management Areas following improvements by March 2026.	Environmental Protection Manager	Housing, Environment and Economy	G	Tonbridge, Aylesford, Larkfield and Borough Green AQMA's revoked in Q3
4.1	Invest in Tonbridge Racecourse Sportsground for our residents and visitors.	Parks and Leisure	Refurbish tennis courts by August 2025. Identify new options for the future use of the vacant bowls green by November 2025.	Leisure Services Manager (Outdoors)	Community Services	G	Works undertaken and refurbished facility in use by public. Completed. Discussions with Cabinet member & local Members undertaken and agreement to progress with site being used to locate water sports activity and other community users. Lease to Leisure Trust being proposed.
4.2	Upgrade paths and bridges at our Country Parks to improve accessibility for residents and visitors.	Parks and Leisure	Improve paths at Haysden Country Park by September 2025. Shallows Bridge Feasibility and Options Report reported to Cabinet by June 2025.	Leisure Services Manager (Outdoors)	Community Services	G	Path works progressed. Cabinet approved scheme. Works to be progressed subject to evaluation of abutments following remove of the existing bridge.
4.3	Implement lighting improvements between Town Lock and Vale Road to provide safer access for the public.	Parks and Leisure/Promoting Well-Being	Engage with the different landowners on this complex site by April 2025. Feasibility report to Finance, Regeneration and Property Scrutiny Select Committee in May 2025. Report to Cabinet to agree to the scheme design by September 2025.	Director of Street Scene, Leisure and Technical Services	Community Services/Infrastructure and Tonbridge Regeneration	G	Landowner engagement actioned. Report progressed. Cabinet approved scheme. Works to be progressed subject to any final comments from ecological study and

Ref	Description of activity	Priority Action(s)	Milestones	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Commentary
							feedback from KWT. The appointment of a contractor has been delayed as all the contractors invited to tender did not wish to bid. This will require going back to the market and result in a delay to the works commencing.
4.4	Improve the condition of playing pitches for our sports clubs at Swanmead sportsground.	Parks and Leisure	Improvements to the drainage undertaken by March 2026.	Leisure Services Manager (Outdoors)	Community Services	G	Works undertaken to football and cricket pitches. Complete.
4.5	Increase the number of vaults at Tonbridge Cemetery.	Parks and Leisure	64 new vaults installed by December 2025.	Parks Officer	Community Services	G	Works completed on the 12th November 2025 and now available to purchase.

Caring for the Environment – Performance Targets:

Ref	Indicator	Description	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Target 2025/26	Trend	Status	Commentary	Benchmarking	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member
001	TMBC Annual Carbon Audit Emissions Data (tCO2e)	Amount of CO2e emitted through council assets and activities.	N/A	3,479	N/A	N/A	2,900	↓	R	Annual Carbon Report taken to CESSC in July 2025. Decarbonisation progress is constrained by the end of PSDS funding and limited alternatives. Some projects, including the new waste contract, will take time to deliver impact.		Climate Change Officer	Housing, Environment and Economy
002	Total Attendance at TMLT Leisure Facilities	Total number of visitors to Larkfield Leisure Centre, Angel Centre, Tonbridge Swimming Pool, and Poulton Wood Golf Course.	375,299	731,454	1,045,100	tbc	1.5 m	↑	G	Note Q4 information still being collated by Leisure Trust.		Leisure Services Manager	Community Services
003	Leisure Centre Income	Overall income generated by our Leisure Facilities as a % to profile.	103.4 %	N/A	103.3 %	tbc	Over 100%	↔	G	Note Q4 information still being collated by Leisure Trust.		Leisure Services Manager	Community Services

Ref	Indicator	Description	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Target 2025/26	Trend	Status	Commentary	Benchmarking	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member
004	Leisure Centre Expenditure	Overall expenditure incurred by our Leisure Facilities as a % to profile.	100.4 %	N/A	99.6 %	tbc	Under 100%	↑	G	Note Q4 information still being collated by Leisure Trust.		Leisure Services Manager	Community Services
005	Improved recycling pages on TMBC website	Number of clicks via social media and other channels during 2025/26.	1,001	2,446	5,097	2,122	2,000	↑	G	Strong performance around waste and recycling messages.		Head of Communication	Finance, Waste and Technical Services
006	% household waste recycled and composted	Calculated comparing the amount of waste sent for recycling, reuse and composting against total waste collected.	50%	47.4 %	48%	44%	54%	↓	A	Q4 - Jan & Feb data only - Mar data awaited from KCC. Average 50%. to date. Target for 26/27 reduced to 52% in ASDP	52.2% (TWBC) 49.6% (MBC) 38.2% (SDC) in 2023/24	Street Scene Manager	Finance, Waste and Technical Services
007	% of individual collections missed (waste)	Percentage of 'missed' residential kerbside collections.	0.08%	0.07 %	0.07 %	0.08 %	0.10%	↓	G			Street Scene Manager	Finance, Waste and Technical Services
008	Waste Collection Completions	% completion of scheduled collections.	100%	100 %	100%	100%	100%	↑	G			Street Scene Manager	Finance, Waste and Technical Services
009	Waste Collection Complaints	Number of formal complaints received about the waste collection service.	62	71	52	41	160	↑	R			Street Scene Manager	Finance, Waste and Technical Services
010	Street Cleansing Complaints	Number of formal complaints received about street cleansing.	5	11	11	3	20	↑	R			Street Scene Manager	Finance, Waste and Technical Services
011	Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA)	Number of AQMA where NO2 results exceed the National Air Quality objective for which they are declared.	0	0	0	0	0	↔	G	Wateringbury AQMA still in place. National AQ criteria met but within 10% of limit so AQMA must remain for now		Environmental Protection Manager	Housing, Environment and Economy
012	Fly Tipping	Number of reported incidents of fly tipping in the borough	254	360	303	432	975	↑	R	There is a Kent-wide increase in fly tip reports. Officers continue to work with contractors to respond to all reports and act accordingly.		Street Scene Manager	Finance, Waste and Technical Services
013	Green Flag Status	Number of our parks with a Green Flag Status.	3	3	3	3	3	↔	G	Tonbridge racecourse Sportsground, Leybourne Lakes Country Park and Haysden Country Park.	45 (across Kent – June 2025)	Leisure Services Manager (Outdoors)	Community Services
014	Environmental Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs)	% of environmental FPNs served that are paid.	66%	81 %	77%	50%	65+%	↑	G	Average 69%		Street Scene Manager	Finance, Waste and Technical Services

Improving Housing and Protecting Areas – Activity:

Ref	Description of activity	Priority Action(s)	Milestones	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Commentary
5.1	Implement the 25/26 milestones in the Local Development Scheme to work towards producing a Local Plan that accommodates sustainable growth and protects our important green spaces.	Local Plan and Housing	Community (Reg 18) Consultation materials (including approach to Member Engagement) considered by Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee and approved by Cabinet in December 2025. Successfully undertake community consultation on the Local Plan in Winter 2025.	Planning Policy Manager	Planning	G	
5.2	Prepare all system and staffing changes for the implementation of the Building Safety Levy as a key Government action arising out of the Grenfell Inquiry.	Local Plan and Housing	Report to Cabinet in Spring 2026 setting out formal preparations for the introduction of Building Safety Levy implementation in Autumn 2026.	Head of Planning	Infrastructure and Tonbridge Regeneration	A	Being reviewed as part of the PAS Action Plan - Recommendation R4.
6.1	Deliver a refreshed approach to Local Lettings Plans for new homes.	Affordable Housing	Local Lettings Plan policy agreed by Cabinet in June 2025. Implementation report to Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee in December 2025.	Head of Housing and Health	Housing, Environment and Economy	G	Local Lettings Policy approved and adopted by Cabinet in June 2025. Presented to H&P SSC in March 2026 - delayed at request of Members.
6.2	Work with the private sector housing market to increase housing solution opportunities for our residents.	Affordable Housing	Report detailing work to date with the Private Sector (including revised Landlord Incentive Scheme) presented to Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee in Autumn 2025.	Head of Housing and Health	Housing, Environment and Economy	G	Presented to H&P SSC in March 2026 - delayed at request of Members.
			Delivery of a Landlord event in Autumn 2025.			G	A landlord event was held on 11/4/26 - this allowed for more progress to have been made on the Renters Rights Act which was key in updating landlords.
7.1	Increase the supply of Temporary Accommodation aligned to significant growth in housing demand.	Housing Support	20 additional units of Temporary Accommodation owned or managed by the Council by March 2026.	Head of Housing and Health	Housing, Environment and Economy	A	18 additional units in Tonbridge now in use (one further unit being used as office on a temporary basis). Delays in delivering additional unit in Larkfield.
7.2	Adopt and implement a Homelessness Strategy to support our most vulnerable residents.	Housing Support	Homelessness Strategy considered by Scrutiny Select Committee by December 2025.	Housing Solutions Manager	Housing, Environment and Economy	G	Draft for consultation presented to H&P SSC in March 2026.
			Homelessness Strategy adopted by Cabinet by March 2026.			A	Due to be reported to Cabinet in July 2026 following consultation.

Ref	Description of activity	Priority Action(s)	Milestones	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Commentary
8.1	Give greater protection to people living in rented accommodation.	Rented Accommodation	Report on the Renters (Reform) Act agreed by Cabinet in Summer 2025 (NB Now updated to the Renters Rights Act) Requirements of the Renters Rights Act successfully implemented and managed by March 2026.	Housing Improvement Manager	Housing, Environment and Economy	G	Renters Rights Act coming into force from 1 May 2026. Update report presented to H&P SSC in March 2026. Implementation of Phase 1, 1 May 2026

Improving Housing and Protecting Areas – Performance Targets:

Ref	Indicator	Description	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Target 2025/26	Trend	Status	Commentary	Benchmarking	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member
015	5-year Housing Land Supply (years)	A calculation of whether there is a deliverable supply of homes to meet the planned housing requirement.	2.89	2.89	2.89	2.89	5 years	↔	R	Based on a housing need of 1,096 dwellings per year and the application of a 20% buffer.		Head of Planning	Planning
016	Processing of 'Major' Planning Applications (% rate)	Percentage calculated as the number of major applications processed within the 13-week timescale. Government target is 60%.	88%	100%	100%	100%	91%	↑	G	Performance has remained strong for Major applications especially through quarters 2,3 and 4.		Head of Planning	Planning
017	Processing of 'Minor' Planning Applications (% rate)	Percentage calculated as the number of minor applications processed within the 8-week timescale. Government target is 65%.	69%	95%	93%	88%	76%	↓	G	This is the most challenging category of applications due to the speculative nature of the application types. Performance dipped slightly due to the change over from Agile to Idox, however we ended the financial year on a high with a really good determination rate.		Head of Planning	Planning
018	Processing of 'Other' Planning Applications (% rate)	Percentage calculated as the number of 'other' applications processed within the 8-week timescale. Government Target is 80%.	77%	94%	95%	91%	90%	↓	G	Performance in the other category remained strong in Quarter 4 with above target for the financial year.		Head of Planning	Planning
019	Planning Appeals - dismissed	Percentage of appeals dismissed against the Council's refusal of planning permission.	65%	83%	0	0	70%	↓	G			Development Manager	Planning
020	Planning Enforcement	Number of Planning Enforcement Cases left open more than 4 months.	74%	77%	71%	49%	68%	↑	G	This is a manual figure as IDOX reporting is not fully functional at this time.		Head of Planning	Planning
021	Tree Preservation Orders	Number of TPO applications in the historic backlog reported to Members in December 2024.	58	42	26	10	0	↑	A	The work necessary to process all 10 of the outstanding cases is		Head of Planning	Planning

Ref	Indicator	Description	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Target 2025/26	Trend	Status	Commentary	Benchmarking	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member
										substantially complete with all 10 cases being at the final stage of the process and it is anticipated that the requests will be determined in the near future.			
022	Housing Register	Total number of people on the housing register	343	N/A	341	366	800	↓	R	The numbers on the register have reduced due to the change in the allocations policy.		Head of Housing and Health	Housing, Environment and Economy
023	Affordable Housing	Number of Affordable Homes built out per annum.	N/A	N/A	N/A	331	150	↑	G	331 is annual figure for Affordable Homes delivered 2025-26, owned and managed by Registered Providers of Affordable Housing. Affordable rent: 172 homes Social rent: 0 homes Shared ownership: 159 homes. Figures are as accurate as possible as at 01 05 26 but subject to change due to outstanding data due for some live sites.	193 (MBC) 119 (TWBC) 35 (SDC) in 2023/24	Head of Housing and Health	Housing, Environment and Economy
024	Private Rented Sector	Number of households made a successful Private Rented Sector Offer.	0	0	0	2	2	↑	R	Accessing the PRS remains challenging however the move on officer has made progress in Q4 with 2 formal PRSOs and in addition a further 6 households were also assisted into the PRS but were not formal discharge of duty.		Head of Housing and Health	Housing, Environment and Economy
025	Temporary Accommodation	Average number of all households in temporary accommodation as at end of the quarter.	122	118	109	102	135	↑	G		283 (MBC) 75 (TWBC) 70 (SDC) in Q3 of 2024/25	Head of Housing and Health	Housing, Environment and Economy
026	Empty Properties	Number of properties in the borough that have been unfurnished and unlive in for longer than 6 months.	456	476	543	542	375	↓	R			Head of Housing and Health	Housing, Environment and Economy
027	Improving Housing Conditions	Number of properties where conditions have improved (cumulative)	24	48	76	23	80	↓	G			Head of Housing and Health	Housing, Environment and Economy
028	Housing Enforcement Notices	Number of Housing Enforcement Notices Served.	1	0	1	5	3	↑	G			Head of Housing and Health	Housing, Environment and Economy

Ref	Indicator	Description	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Target 2025/26	Trend	Status	Commentary	Benchmarking	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member
029	Disabled Facilities Grants (cumulative)	Number of homes adapted or improved for older and vulnerable residents to promote their independence and keep them safe in the community.	26	39	61	16	80	↓	G			Head of Housing and Health	Housing, Environment and Economy

Investing in our Borough and Local Economy – Activity:

Ref	Description of activity	Priority Action(s)	Milestones	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Commentary
9.1	Drive forward Tonbridge Town Centre Regeneration Plans.	Using Land and Assets Better	Following the completion of the community engagement phase in Spring 2025, Masterplan for the Town Centre adopted by Cabinet by September 2025.	Head of Administration and Property Services	Infrastructure and Tonbridge Regeneration	G	Cabinet adopted Masterplan and Delivery Strategy October 2025
9.2	Make solid progress on our plans to improve leisure provision in Tonbridge.	Using Land and Assets Better	Progress plans for replacement Angel Leisure Centre to RIBA Stage 2 (initial concept design) by autumn 2025.	Head of Street Scene and Leisure	Infrastructure and Tonbridge Regeneration	G	RIBA Stages 2& 3 completed - currently in Stage 4 with planning application submitted.
9.3	Implement early phases of Tonbridge Farm Sportsground masterplan to provide improved, accessible leisure facilities for the whole community.	Using Land and Assets Better	Approval of Tonbridge Farm business plan by Cabinet in Spring 2025.	Head of Street Scene and Leisure	Infrastructure and Tonbridge Regeneration	G	Master Plan approved - complete
			Improve or replace existing facilities (including new pavilion roof and all-weather pitches) in accordance with the masterplan for the site by March 2026.			A	Capital Plan Scheme for new full-size, all-weather pitch approved. Pavilion roof being considered separately through BRREP. Scheme dependant on Football Foundation/Kent Football Association Funding.
9.4	Improve Bailey Bridge East car park in Aylesford.	Using Land and Assets Better	Improve car park to provide additional spaces, CCTV and new surface by Spring 2025.	Head of Technical Services	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	A	Implementation of project delayed due to external factors. Planning Application has been submitted and is due for consideration at full Council in July 2026.
9.5	Stabilise flood mitigation protection at Wouldham River Wall.	Using Land and Assets Better	Complete RIBA Stage 1 (Preparation and Briefing) by Summer 2025. Design and Procurement for the mitigation protection works in Spring 2026.	Head of Technical Services	Infrastructure and Tonbridge Regeneration	N/A	Project removed from ASDP following re-allocation of capital funds. External monitoring of wall will continue.
10.1	Ensure investment in infrastructure is aligned to population and housing growth.	Economy Bouncing Back	Produce fully costed and dated Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Funding Statement to inform the Local Plan by Summer 2025.	Planning Policy Manager	Planning	A	Work is progressing on the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) to support the Local Plan including engagement with infrastructure providers. An Interim IDP was published in October 2025, but isn't currently fully costed.
10.2	Delivery of the Tonbridge and Malling UK Shared Prosperity Fund (including Rural England Prosperity Fund) to support our businesses and residents.	Economy Bouncing Back	£327,000 of funding spent on projects by March 2026. 100% of Rural England Prosperity Fund allocated to eligible projects by November 2025.	Strategic Economic Regeneration Manager	Housing, Environment and Economy	G	Programme at 100% spent at the end of the financial year, supporting a total of 10 socio-economic initiatives across the borough. All allocated by 05 September 2025, with 100% of funding claimed by the end of the financial year.

Ref	Description of activity	Priority Action(s)	Milestones	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Commentary
10.3	Establish and implement a new programme to support the local economy using Business Rates Pool funding.	Economy Bouncing Back	Business Rates Pool Programme agreed by Cabinet in September 2025, with implementation from October 2025 onwards.	Strategic Economic Regeneration Manager	Housing, Environment and Economy	G	Business Rates Pool Programme agreed by Cabinet in July 2025 with progress on projects well underway, including the Green Business Grants Scheme - Round 6 which launched in February 2026 and funding towards new air source heat pumps at Larkfield Leisure Centre.
10.4	Delivery of People and Skills Grant Scheme that creates training and employment opportunities for our residents.	Economy Bouncing Back	Round 1 Funded projects completed by December 2025, supporting 100 residents. Cabinet Member approval to launch a Round 2 in June 2025.	Strategic Economic Regeneration Manager	Housing, Environment and Economy	G	All Round 1 projects now completed. In total, 159 residents have been supported through projects funded. Completed - Approval given in April. Round 2 launched in May 2025 with a deadline for submissions of 18 June 2025.
10.5	Implement a new Street Trading policy that supports our businesses, enhances our towns and generates maximum community benefit.	Economy Bouncing Back	Implementation of new policy by September 2025.	Licensing Inspector	Housing, Environment and Economy / Community Services	G	New policy agreed at Licensing and Appeals Committee in November 2025.
10.6	Support the introduction of a new Banking Hub in Tonbridge that provides face-to-face personal and business banking services.	Economy Bouncing Back	Temporary Banking Hub up and running by Summer 2025. Permanent location for the Banking Hub secured by March 2026.	Strategic Economic Regeneration Manager	Housing, Environment and Economy / Community Services	G	Completed - Approval given in April. Round 2 launched in May 2025 with a deadline for submissions of 18 June 2025.
						A	On 10 March 2026, Cash Access submitted a planning and advertising consent application for the use of the former Wimpy as a new permanent Banking Hub in the town centre.
11.1	Help drive visitor numbers to Tonbridge Castle through events and activities.	Profile of Assets	Deliver a Summer marketing campaign during June to September 2025.	Head of Communication / Tonbridge Castle, Events and Customer Services Manager	Community Services	G	Marketing campaign delivered. Advertising across print and social media, 20K leaflet distribution across Kent and London Tourism Centre.

Ref	Description of activity	Priority Action(s)	Milestones	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Commentary
			Implement new activities following loss of the Gateway Service by March 2026.			R	Banking Hub will be on site until at least May 2026 however they have advised they may need an extension. Project is ongoing to assess viability of a café in the ground floor reception footprint. No decision will be made by March 2026. Consultant appointed to assess feasibility of delivering in-house café with a deadline for their report 3 April 2026, report to Scrutiny Select Committee July 2026 and then onto Cabinet.
11.2	Install new Digital Information Boards to help improve real-time communication with our residents.	Profile of Assets	Project approved by Cabinet by Summer 2025. New Digital Information Boards installed at locations across the borough by March 2026.	Head of Communication / Director of Central Services	Community Services	R	Project timescales reviewed and moved to ASDP for 26/27. For locations across the borough, timescale reviewed and moved to ASDP for delivery in 2026/27
12.1	Work with strategic partners to bring forward/complete key employment sites.	Strategic Partners	Panattoni Park Aylesford (one of the largest logistics developments in the Southeast) fully built out and occupied by October 2025.	Head of Planning / Strategic Economic Regeneration Manager	Planning / Housing, Environment and Economy.	G	Completed and all occupied.
			Planning application approved for new Science and Innovation Building at East Malling Research (NIAB EMR) by December 2025.	Head of Planning / Strategic Economic Regeneration Manager	Planning / Housing, Environment and Economy.	A	No planning application has been received for this project to date.
			RBLI Centenary Village Phase 2 completed and occupied by December 2025.	Head of Planning / Strategic Economic Regeneration Manager	Planning / Housing, Environment and Economy.	G	Phase 2a was completed in the second half of 2025. As of early 2026, the scheme is now in its final phase of development, having progressed well over the past year.
			Application for RBLI Factory Development to be determined by summer 2025.			G	Approved on 26 August 2025.
			London Golf Club planning application determined by spring 2025.			G	Completed – Application has been determined (April 2025).

Ref	Description of activity	Priority Action(s)	Milestones	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Commentary
			Buckmore Park planning application determined by summer 2025 (subject to submission in early 2025).			G	Application submitted and approved on 30 June.
12.2	Support the Environment Agency with the completion of Leigh Expansion and Hildenborough Embankment Scheme.	Strategic Partners	Completion of scheme and full payment of Council contribution by November 2025.	Strategic Economic Regeneration Manager	Infrastructure and Tonbridge Regeneration	G	Following completion of the Leigh Expansion and Hildenborough Embankment Scheme (LEHES), testing has been undertaken, and reinstatement works are nearing completion.

Investing in our Borough and Local Economy – Performance Targets:

Ref	Indicator	Description	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Target 2025/26	Trend	Status	Commentary	Benchmarking	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member
030	Town Centre Vacancy Levels (%)	The number of commercial retail units in our town and village centres that are vacant as a % of the total number.	N/A	5.3%	N/A	N/A	5.7%	↑	G	Annual Survey undertaken in August 2025 - next survey will be in August 2026.	13.9% (UK); 14% (TW) in 2024.	Strategic Economic Regeneration Manager	Housing, Environment and Economy
031	Business Births and Deaths	The ratio of business births to business deaths	N/A	N/A	1.15	N/A	1.00	↑	G		TW - 1.11; Sevenoaks - 1.16; Maidstone - 1.14	Strategic Economic Regeneration Manager	Housing, Environment and Economy
032	Unemployment Rate (%)	The % of the workforce that are claiming unemployment benefits.	2.4%	2.4%	2.4%	2.5%	2.2%	↔	A	Unemployment figures have plateaued at 2.4-2.5% for the past 12 months.	Sevenoaks - 2.3%; TW - 2.5%; Maidstone - 3.5%	Strategic Economic Regeneration Manager	Housing, Environment and Economy
033	Occupation of Rental Properties	The % of council-owned commercial properties that are in occupation	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	↔	G			Head of Administration and Property Services	Housing, Environment and Economy

Ref	Indicator	Description	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Target 2025/26	Trend	Status	Commentary	Benchmarking	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member
034	Council Events – Income	Total income generated from council run/supported events.	£25,429	£35,697	£44,471	£42,638	£58,000	↓	G	Difference with Q3 & Q4 is return of land deposit to event organiser less deductions. This will not impact this budget line for 2026/27 as will be administered elsewhere Reduction in Christmas income due to change of provider and scale of event		Tonbridge Castle, Events and Customer Services Manager	Community Services
035	Property Rentals – Income	Total Income generated from commercial property rentals.	£99,995	£180,521	£363,512	£434,245	£420,000	↑	G	Increased income based on several rent reviews being concluded		Head of Administration and Property Services	Housing, Environment and Economy
036	Tonbridge Castle - Income	Total income generated by activities at Tonbridge Castle (Figure includes: Chamber Hire; Tea/coffee sales; Weddings; Castle Attraction and Artisan Market)	£15,236	£41,893	£58,905	£74,350	£95,000	↑	R	Castle was closed all of Q1 and through to August of Q2		Tonbridge Castle, Events and Customer Services Manager	Community Services
037	Tonbridge Castle – Tour Visitor Numbers	Total number of visitors to Tonbridge Castle that take the tour (NB first few months of 25/26 the castle will be closed)	0	630	1537	2333	3,000	↑	R	Castle was closed all of Q1 and through to August of Q2		Tonbridge Castle, Events and Customer Services Manager	Community Services
038	Employment Land	% net change (gain/loss) in employment land	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0%		N/A	Data unavailable at time of publication.		Planning Policy Manager	Planning
039	People and Skills Fund	Number of local residents benefitting from projects completed through the People and Skills Fund	0	71	159	159	100	↑	G	Round 1 projects now completed with figures per project as follows: Oaks Specialist College - 70; Compaid - 55; Communigrow - 26 and Runway/Oaks - 8		Strategic Economic Regeneration Manager	Housing, Environment and Economy

Efficient and Effective Council – Activity:

Ref	Description of activity	Priority Action(s)	Milestones	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Commentary
13.1	Ensure that the Council maximises the opportunities to influence the implementation of the Government's Devolution/Local Government Reorganisation agenda within Tonbridge and Malling in the interests of local residents and takes action to navigate a path that minimises the inherent risks and uncertainty associated with this type of process.	Innovative and Cost-Effective Services	Actively contribute to the Government's process for determining the Local Government Reorganisation geography across Kent and Medway by submitting proposals for new Unitary Authorities by November 2025.	Chief Executive	Executive Leader	G	A proposal supporting Option 3a (3 Unitary Model) submitted to Government on 28 November 2025.
			Establish formal programme management arrangements to ensure the Council is fully engaged in managing the preparation and transition process by Winter 2025.			G	Workstreams developed for both West Kent Councils and Kent as a whole that commenced after the deadline for final submissions in November 2025.
			Complete a Community Governance Review for a Town Council in Tonbridge during 2025/26: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial report (including Terms of Reference) to Members in May 2025 Consultation undertaken in Summer 2025 Final recommendations to Council by March 2026. 			G	Review process entering latter stages following a two-stage consultation (in Summer and Winter 2025). Final recommendations to Council in February 2026.
13.2	Bring forward a comprehensive approach to transformation in the Council.	Innovative and Cost-Effective Services	5 Wider Management Team meetings during 2025/26.	Chief Executive	Executive Leader	G	5 meetings undertaken to date - 09 April 2025; 18 June 2025; 25 September 2025; 19 November 2025; 22 January 2026.
			Reporting to Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet on Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025/26 (including performance targets) starting in Summer 2025 (Q1).			G	Q1 and Q2 reporting successfully completed. The process of Q3 reporting is underway.
			5 awards applications submitted by March 2026 to recognise Council successes.			G	5 - Civic Society Awards for Wet Room and Green Business Shelter, Silver Armed Forces Award and applications to the LGC Awards now submitted.

Ref	Description of activity	Priority Action(s)	Milestones	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Commentary
13.3	Develop a robust Council-wide Project Management approach. that drives forward successful delivery.	Innovative and Cost-Effective Services	Develop and Implement new Project Management templates by Spring 2025.	Strategic Economic Regeneration Manager / Tonbridge Town Centre Programme Manager	Executive Leader	G	Completed - Templates published on StaffNet (May 2025)
			Ensure all projects have a manager and sponsor by summer 2025.			G	
			Project Management training takes place in summer 2025.			G	First session on 11 September followed by a second took place on 01 October 2025. An additional session was delivered on 04 December 2025.
13.4	Refresh and update Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) in light of new Government priorities and the direction for local government funding to be set out in the Spring (2025) Fair Funding Review.	Innovative and Cost-Effective Services	Refresh MTFS in November 2025 with update for Budget Setting in February 2026.	Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	G	Update underway with announcement of provisional settlement in December. Final MTFS presented as part of Budget Setting in February 2026.
13.5	Undertake a base budget review across all services to identify contributions towards in-year saving and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2026/27.	Innovative and Cost-Effective Services	Initial report on options to save a minimum of £300,000 by summer 2025, to feed into the budget setting process for 2026/27.	Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	G	Completed.
13.6	Update the Treasury Management and Investment Strategy, aligning it to the Council's ambitions for property and regeneration investment.	Innovative and Cost-Effective Services	Updated Strategy for recommendation by Audit Committee in January 2026 and adoption by Council in February 2026.	Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer/ Principal Accountant	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	G	Updated version to be presented for approval in January 2026 with final approval at Council in February 2026.
13.7	Implement Second Homes Premium.	Innovative and Cost-Effective Services	Premium to be included in annual Council Tax bills (as appropriate) from 1 April 2025.	Benefits and Welfare Manager	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	G	Implemented.
13.8	Review earmarked reserves with a view to free up funding to assist with delivery of priority capital projects.	Innovative and Cost-Effective Services	Officer review to be undertaken by October 2025 with report to Cabinet by November 2025.	Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer/ Principal Accountant	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	G	Review completed with Report to Cabinet in January 2026

Ref	Description of activity	Priority Action(s)	Milestones	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Commentary
13.9	Implement Integra Centros Financial ledger system in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness of transactions and reporting.	Innovative and Cost-Effective Services	Implementation of full digital signatures and improved budgetary control reporting by March 2026.	Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer / Principal Accountant	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	A	Signatures in place, Budgetary Control still under review.
13.10	Strengthen Annual Governance Statement (AGS).	Innovative and Cost-Effective Services	Annual Governance Statement signed off by Chief Executive and Leader of the Council by May 2025.	Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer / Principal Accountant	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	G	AGS signed in May 2025
			Annual Governance Statement agreed by Audit Committee by July 2025.			G	Agreed by Audit Committee in July 2025.
13.11	Undertake an independent Planning Advisory Service Review and agree Action Plan for improvement.	Innovative and Cost-Effective Services	Complete independent review by September 2025.	Head of Planning	Planning	G	Review completed, with action plan considered at Scrutiny Select Committee and then Cabinet.
			Action Plan considered by Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee by October 2025.			G	
			Plan agreed by Cabinet by December 2025.			G	
			Agreed action plan fully delivered by March 2026.			A	Will not be possible to complete all of these by the end of March 2026.
13.12	Implement a new planning fee structure aligned to expected secondary legislation.	Innovative and Cost-Effective Services	New fee structure considered by Planning & Housing Scrutiny Select Committee by December 2025. New fee structure agreed by Cabinet by February 2026.	Head of Planning	Planning	R	Secondary legislation has not yet been passed by the Government and as such there will be a delay to the programme timelines until such time as the Government lay the required legislation.
13.13	Consolidate Council's accommodation at Kings Hill.	Innovative and Cost-Effective Services	Report tender outcome to Members and award contract for work to Gibson Building East in June 2025.	Head of Administration and Property Services	Housing, Environment and Economy	G	Complete: reported to Members on 03 June 2025.
			Relocate staff from Gibson Building East to Gibson Building West in June/July 2025.			G	Staff relocated to Gibson West in July 2025.
			Members to consider Gibson West future by June 2025.			G	Complete: Cabinet (3 June 2025) approved principle of disposal.
			Reduction of at least £200,000 in annual operating costs by end of March 2026.			A	Date for when savings are due has been revised to March 2027 to reflect progress with Gibson East refurbishment and Gibson West proposed disposal.

Ref	Description of activity	Priority Action(s)	Milestones	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Commentary
13.14	Review of Executive Scrutiny Protocol and Associated Governance Arrangements.	Innovative and Cost-Effective Services	Review presented to Cabinet by September 2025.	Director of Central Services	Executive Leader	G	Revised protocol approved October 2025.
13.15	Review of Workforce Strategy to ensure the organisation continues to evolve to deliver high quality services.	Innovative and Cost-Effective Services	Revised strategy, including a new Workforce Monitoring Statement, to be approved by General Purposes Committee by September 2025.	Head of Human Resources and Development	Executive Leader	G	Strategy approved in May 2025.
13.16	Implementation of Member Development Strategy to promote a positive and inclusive culture of learning, development and continual improvement.	Innovative and Cost-Effective Services	Undertake Member Survey to identify development needs by end of June 2025. Strategy to be approved by General Purposes Committee in October 2025.	Head of Human Resources and Development	Executive Leader	G	Member survey undertaken December 2025 Strategy approved January 2026
13.17	Deliver new external litter enforcement contract that helps to reduce Anti-Social Behaviour and protect our environment.	Innovative and Cost-Effective Services	New contract to commence in April 2025.	Street Scene Manager	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	G	Complete. Contract commenced. Contract currently being reviewed in light of problems and new legislation. Report to May 26 CESSC.
13.18	Investigate and trial new technologies to improve our car parks and improve the experience of our customers.	Innovative and Cost-Effective Services	Report on the potential of parking machines accepting contactless payments considered by Communities and Environment Select Committee in May 2025 and by Cabinet in July 2025. Automatic Number Plate Recognition introduced and operational at 2 car parks by March 2026.	Head of Technical Services / Parking Manager	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	G	Decision made to progress trial in Bradford Street Car Park and Sovereign Way North. Implementation delayed due to staff resources.
						R	Project delayed to next financial year due to resourcing challenges (currently progressing with procurement and legal processes underway).
13.19	Implement the requirements of the new Procurement Act, and subsequently review the Council's financial procedure rules and contract procedure rules contained within the constitution.	Innovative and Cost-Effective Services	Contracts tendered in accordance with new Procurement Act by April 2025.	Director of Street Scene, Leisure and Technical Services	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	G	Completed and ongoing.
			Updated financial rules and contract procedure rules approved by Council by March 2026.			A	Updated Financial Procedure rules were taken to Council In April but have been deferred to FRPSSC and then Council in July 2026
13.20	Make it easier for customers to renew their garden waste subscription.	Innovative and Cost-Effective Services	Repeat payment option introduced for subscribers by March 2026.	Head of Finance and S151 Officer	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	A	Currently on target for soft launch in April 2026. Due to IT requirements soft launch has been delayed but full service is expected by end of Q1 2026/27
13.21	Identify and implement clear plan to resolve outstanding matters associated with the current Agile Programme	Innovative and Cost-Effective Services	The following teams upgraded to the new system by: Environmental Health by Summer 2025 Housing Services by Summer 2025 Licensing by Summer 2025	Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	A	The Uniform system is updated for all services and the regulatory services and Housing Teams have continued to operate on this system. Training has

Ref	Description of activity	Priority Action(s)	Milestones	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Commentary
							been provided on systems administration and workflow management.
14.1	Launch an enhanced Community Enforcement Team.	Available Services and Advice	Funding contributions agreed with partner organisations and external funders by April 2025.	Safer and Stronger Communities Manager	Community Services	G	Completed - Funding contributions agreed (April 2025)
			New team up and running, with Communications Plan in place to raise awareness amongst our communities in April 2025.			G	Completed - new team started 21 May 2025
14.2	Campaign to increase uptake of E-billing and promote the Citizen Access service for Council Tax.	Available Services and Advice	Complete delivery of the campaign by December 2025 in order to impact on the 2026/27 billing programme.	Benefits and Welfare Manager	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	A	Web Content team to create a webpage/banner to promote in the run up to annual billing.
14.3	Implement key projects as set out in the IT & Digital Strategy 2023-27 roadmap.	Available Services and Advice	Migration of all internal and external eForms from an EBASE to JADU platform and decommission all relevant systems infrastructure by Spring 2025.	Head of IT	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	A	Project was deprioritised due to IDOX migration work
			Adoption of corporate enterprise document management solution including digitization of all paper records across all services within the council by March 2026.			A	Project was deprioritised due to IDOX migration work
			Migration of all shared drives across the authority to SharePoint, including training for all staff by March 2026.			G	Achieved
14.4	Review National Cyber Security Centre's Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF) with a view to working towards compliance.	Available Services and Advice	Implement recommendations made through the CAF and complete the assessment to ensure compliance by December 2025.	Head of IT	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	G	Achieved
14.5	Complete the Integration of Services into the Contact Centre to improve customer experience.	Available Services and Advice	Transfer of Waste Services in Spring 2025.	Tonbridge Castle, Events and Customer Services Manager	Community Services	G	Transfer complete 1 May 2025.

Ref	Description of activity	Priority Action(s)	Milestones	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Commentary
			Transfer of Planning by Autumn 2025.			R	This has been moved to 2026 due to ongoing review of service and business commitments – agreed to move to 2026-27.
14.6	Deliver effective and efficient County Council Elections for our residents	Available Services and Advice	County Council elections delivered successfully in May 2025.	Head of Electoral Services	Executive Leader	G	Completed May 2025.
15.1	Distribute 2025/26 Household Support Fund support to our most vulnerable residents.	Promoting Well-Being	100% of funding support provided in accordance with the funding criteria by March 2026.	Benefits and Welfare Manager	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	G	100% allocated and MI report to KCC completed.
15.2	Produce new Health Action Team (HAT) Action Plan for the One You Service to deliver health & wellbeing impact across the borough.	Promoting Well-Being	Health Action Team Action Plan approved by Cabinet by June 2025.	One You Team Leader	Housing, Environment and Economy	A	Although a formal action plan has not been approved from the Health Action Team actions are agreed and progressed within the meeting cycle.
			Implementation of Action Plan from June 2025 onwards, including completion of two key actions from each of the three priorities by March 2026.			A	Actions are underway via a variety of partners. Recent funding has been made available to target projects to meet the Health Action Team priorities.
16.1	Work towards securing a Silver Award in the Armed Forces Employer Recognition Scheme to raise awareness of the needs of the Armed Forces Community.	Supporting Residents	Granting Royal British Legion Industries Freedom of the Borough at a ceremony in May 2025.	Corporate Policy and Communities Manager	Community Services	G	RBLI granted Freedom of the Borough in May 2025.
			Application approved by Cabinet and submitted to Government in March 2026.			G	Application submitted in May 2025 and subsequently approved.
16.2	Deliver a Community Awards Scheme to celebrate individuals and groups making a positive impact and recognising outstanding dedication and service in the borough.	Supporting Residents	Scheme launched in June 2025. Awards presentations to be held by the Mayor by December 2025.	Corporate Policy and Communities Manager	Community Services	G	Completed – Award presentation evening held 19 November 2025
16.3	In recognition of changing demographics in the borough and to respond effectively to	Supporting Residents	Training plan reported to Cabinet by October 2025.	Corporate Policy and	Community Services	G	Training plan reported to Cabinet on 14 October 2025.

Ref	Description of activity	Priority Action(s)	Milestones	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member	RAG Rating	Commentary
	local need, develop and deliver equalities and diversity training for all staff, identifying those posts that require enhanced training.		Training delivered to all staff by March 2026.	Communities Manager		G	Completed - 2 x mandatory e-learning courses for all staff (Diversity & Equality, Direct & Indirect Discrimination) September 2025 - October 2025
16.4	Improve Council's Safeguarding arrangements and performance.	Supporting Residents	New training plan approved by Cabinet in October 2025, with training delivered to all staff and Members by March 2026.	Corporate Policy and Communities Manager	Community Services	G	Training plan reported to Cabinet on 14 October 2025.
			New enhanced safeguarding webpage with links to support agencies and safeguarding advice by March 2026.			G	Completed - Safeguarding hub page now complete on Staffnet (intranet)

Efficient and Effective Council – Performance Targets:

Ref	Indicator	Description	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Target 2025/26	Trend	Status	Commentary	Benchmarking	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member
040	Food Safety Inspections	% of due food safety inspections undertaken (Risk Category A-E).	93%	93%	113%	122%	99%	↑	G	More new businesses inspected in addition to those businesses already in programme falling due for inspection in Q3 and Q4		Food and Safety Manager	Housing, Environment and Economy
041	One You Service	The number of residents benefiting from the support of the 'One You' Service (cumulative)	209	173	148	147	750	↔	A	The number of residents benefiting from support of the One You Service		One You Team Leader	Housing, Environment and Economy
042	Safeguarding	The number of priority actions arising from the independent safeguarding audit remaining unresolved for more than 6 months.	0	0	0	0	0	↔	G	No priority actions arising.		Corporate Policy Communities Manager	Community Services
043	Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) (cumulative)	Total number of ASB cases in the borough that are reported to the Council.	127	106	65	70	510	↓	G	Total of 368 reports received for the year.		Safer and Stronger Communities Manager	Community Services
044	Victim-Based Crime	Total number of reported Victim-based crimes in the borough.	1,667	1,714	1,614	1,591	7,200	↑	G	Total of 6,586 reports during the year.		Safer and Stronger Communities Manager	Community Services
045	My Account registrations (cumulative)	The total number of residents with a My Account.	48,988	52,343	55,819	59,146	47,000	↑	G	Strong performance willing increase in social messaging on		Head of Communication	Community Services

Ref	Indicator	Description	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Target 2025/26	Trend	Status	Commentary	Benchmarking	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member
										MyAccount and no guest signups for waste forms			
046	My TMBC app downloads (cumulative)	The number of app downloads over the course of a year.	-39	143	-69	346	1,500	↑	R	See marked un-subscribes following release of app notifications		Head of Communication	Community Services
047	Public engagement with news from TMBC (cum.)	The number of clicks on social media content over the course of a year.	4,593	20,624	3,658	5,195	22,000	↑	G	Strong Q3 performance around waste and recycling messages.		Head of Communication	Community Services
048	Staff engagement	The proportion of staff who feel positive about working at the Council.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	85%	↔	A			Head of Communication	-
049	Vacant Posts (FTE)	Number of positions within the council that are currently vacant.	12	12	11	11	7	↔	A			Head of Human Resources and Development	-
050	Sickness Absence – short term	Average number of working days per employee across the organisation lost to short term sickness absence.	3.23	2.7	3.02	3.02	2.7	↔	A		5.7 (KCC); 2.9 (MBC) in 2023	Head of Human Resources and Development	-
051	Gender Pay Gap - Mean	The difference between the mean pay of men and women within the council.	22.3%	22.3%	22.3	22.29	18%	↔	A		-1.4% (SDC) 3% (MBC) 9.7% (KCC) 11.2% (TWBC) in 2024/25	Head of Human Resources and Development	-
052	Contact Centre – Handled Rate	% of calls answered in the Contact Centre against those presented.	84%	78%	87%	85%	94%	↓	A	Large issues with payment system provider impacting queues, residents ability to pay - drove higher contact Longer impacted sickness for some of team Advisor resignations with impact on trained advisors and training programme		Tonbridge Castle, Events and Customer Services Manager	Community Services
053	Contact Centre - Emails	% of emails responded to within 24 hours.	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	↔	G			Tonbridge Castle, Events and Customer Services Manager	Community Services

Ref	Indicator	Description	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Target 2025/26	Trend	Status	Commentary	Benchmarking	Lead Officer	Cabinet Member
054	Contact Centre - Webchat	% of webchats handled by the Contact Centre.	70%	66%	61%	63%	99%	↑	R	Impacted by staff turnover and long-term sickness within the team.		Tonbridge Castle, Events and Customer Services Manager	Community Services
055	Licensing	Fees generated from the processing of premises licenses under the Licensing Act 2003.	£20,823	12,190.50	£54,242.50	9,621	£85,000	↓	G	Includes all fees relating to annual licences, new licences, variation and TENS.		Licensing Inspector	Community Services
056	Council Tax	Percentage calculated as a cumulative year-to-date figure, from the total council tax payments received compared to the total amounts payable in that year.	27.3%	55.1%	92.6%	97.47%	98.1%	↑	G		98.0% (SDC) 97.5% (TWBC) 96.7% (MBC) in 2023/24	Benefits and Welfare Manager	Finance, Waste and Technical Services
057	Non-Domestic (Business) Rates	Percentage calculated as a cumulative year-to-date figure, from the total business rates payments received compared to the total amounts payable in that year.	31.2%	57.5%	85.3%	98.31%	99.4%	↑	G	Large assessment entered into the list at the end of the year with no opportunity to collect.	98.7% (TWBC) 98.4% (MBC) 97.3% (SDC) in 2023/24	Benefits and Welfare Manager	Finance, Waste and Technical Services
058	Salary Monitoring Data	Variation to budget approved by Council in February 2025 and 2026 including the agreed management savings targets.	£63,250 below	£114,300 below	£181,650 (positive)	£241,400 (positive)	£0	↑	G			Head of Finance	Finance, Waste and Technical Services
059	Income Monitoring Data	Variation to budget approved by Council in February 2025 and 2026.	£64,673 below	£36,442 above	£952 (positive)	£519,027 (positive)	£0	↑	G			Head of Finance	Finance, Waste and Technical Services
060	Determination of Housing Benefit claims	Number of days to accurately determine new Housing Benefit claims and changes to existing claims.	28 and 6	29 and 7	28 and 6	22 and 2	26 and 5	↔	A			Benefits and Welfare Manager	Finance, Waste and Technical Services
061	Determination of Council Tax Reduction Scheme claims	Number of days to accurately determine new Council Tax Reduction Scheme claims (median) and changes to existing claims.	19 and 2	33 and 2	29 and 2	25 and 2	30 and 2	↓	G			Benefits and Welfare Manager	Finance, Waste and Technical Services
062	Prompt payment of invoices	The percentage of invoices paid with the 30-day deadline.	99.6%	99.8%	100	99.5	99%	↓	G	7 invoice queries has slightly reduced the result for quarter 4. However, still above the RAG		Exchequer Services and Systems Manager	Finance, Waste and Technical Services

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

25 June 2026

Part 1 - Public

Matters for Information



Cabinet Member	Cllr Martin Coffin, Deputy Executive Leader; and Finance, Waste and Technical Services
Responsible Officer	Damian Roberts, Chief Executive
Report Author	Gill Fox, Corporate Policy & Communities Manager

External Specialist Support 2025/26

1 Summary and Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide information on the spend and use of external expertise by the Council during 2025/26. As a small authority, the Council must draw on external specialist support where appropriate, enabling access to expertise on demand while avoiding the cost of permanent in-house provision.
- 1.2 This report fulfils the recommendation agreed at Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11th September 2024 that the Council continue to closely manage future use of external expertise, with a review reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis.

2 Corporate Strategy Priority Area

- 2.1 Efficient services for all our residents, maintaining an effective council.
- 2.2 Taking steps to monitor the use and spend on external experts, along with consideration of specialised skills, retaining talent and building in-house capacity contributes to ensuring value for public money and delivering excellent, efficient services for the borough.
- 2.3 Members are asked to consider the contents of this report and note the information provided in the summary of spend for 2025/26 at Annex 1 and Annex 2.
- 2.4 Information on the use of external specialist support and associated spend will continue to be reported to this Committee annually.

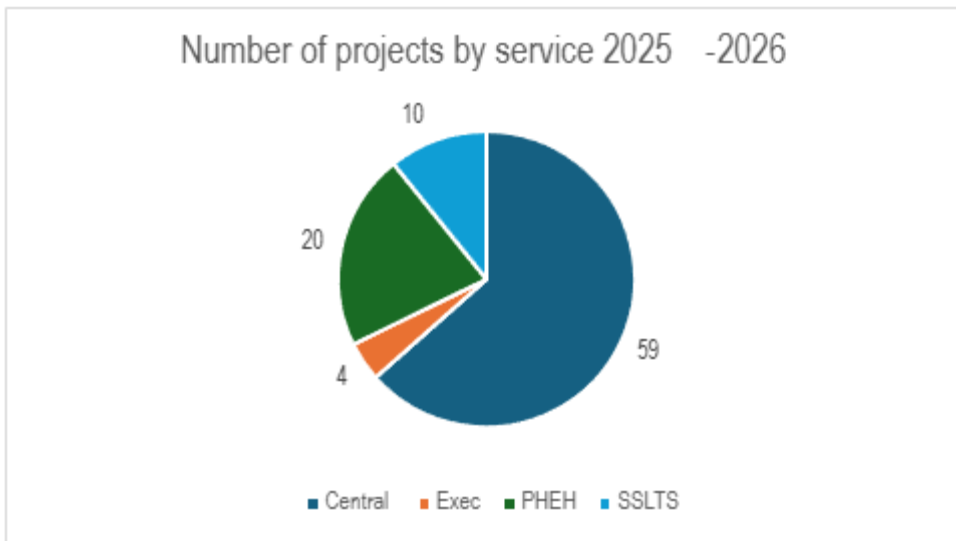
3 Introduction and Background

- 3.1 This is the third report taken to this Committee looking at the cost of external expertise across the council. This follows agreement in 2024 that this spend be considered on an annual basis.
- 3.2 The following was agreed in 2024: *“consultancy work which is providing knowledge, techniques and assets to improve performance that is outside of the Council’s “business as usual”. This would include the use of external third parties, providing expertise that is typically not available internally. Focusing on this aspect, would rule out the use of contractors who fill vacancies and are used for the day-to-day operational resources to maintain departmental function.”*
- 3.3 This report and summary information provided in Annex 1 and Annex 2 covers the activity during the last financial year, 2025/26. Annex 1 looks specifically at operational support, providing specialist advice. Annex 2 is project based, highlighting activity that is linked to one off project delivery, where the Council would be unable to progress an initiative without this support.

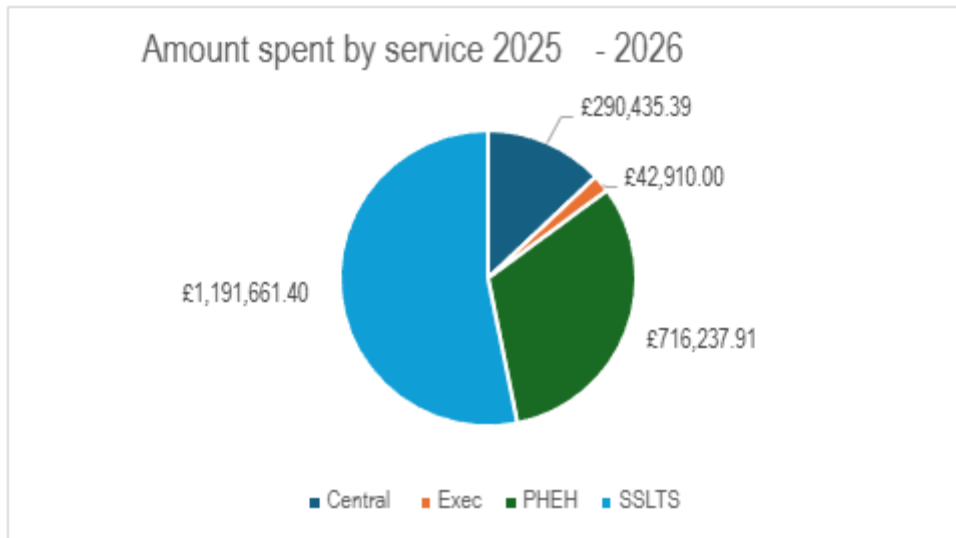
4 Overview of 2025/26 spend

- 4.1 Much of the spend is utilising external funding for time limited projects, without which, the projects would not be feasible, and any external funding would potentially be lost.
- 4.2 Where specialists have been necessary, they provide expertise that is not available in house. In these cases, recruitment of specialist staff with the relevant knowledge, is not financially viable as they would be under occupied for most of the year, due to the nature of the work. For example, the estimated annual salary for a senior/principal architect employed by a district council would typically have a salary range of £55,000 - £70,000+, giving total employer costs of £75,000 - £100,000+ per year. Similarly, a principal or Lead Ecologist employed by a district council would give total employer costs of £80,000 - £90,000 per year (figures are AI-generated estimates based on typical UK local government salary and employment cost data, for indicative purposes only).
- 4.3 The Council uses the procurement partnership in place with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council to help secure value for money, test the market and procurement options, and ensure that the most appropriate approach is taken in each case.
- 4.4 Some specialist legal advice is procured through a direct approach, reflecting the exemption for Legal services within the procurement procedure rules and the need to secure rapid expert support where required. This also applies in areas where the council does not hold the necessary specialist capacity in house, for example Trowers & Hamblins LLP are used for housing law, where the council does not employ a dedicated housing solicitor.

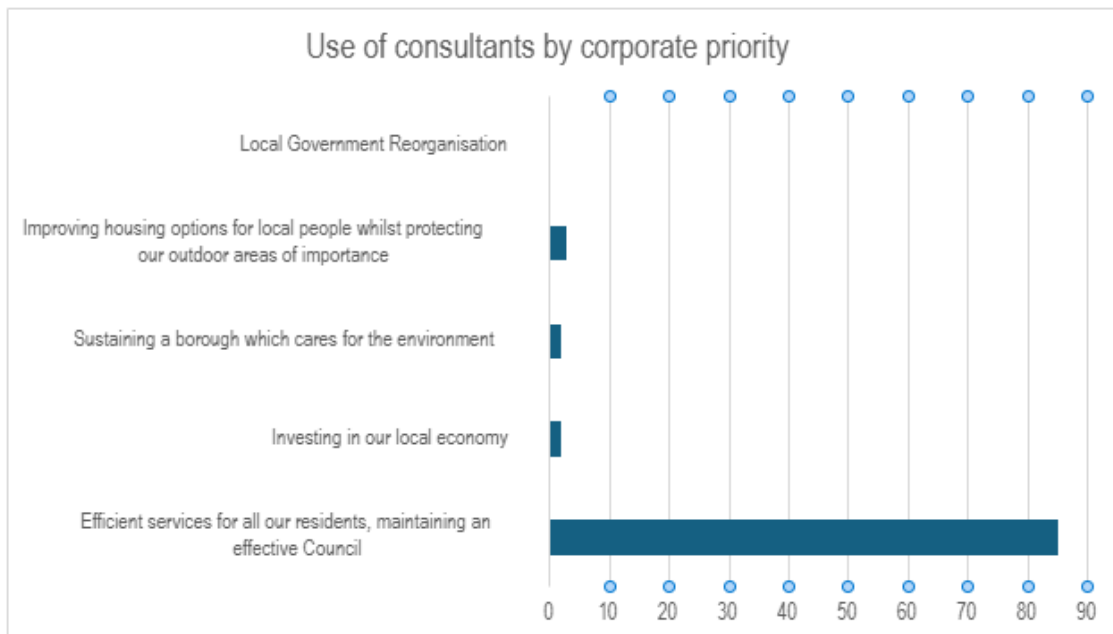
- 4.5 In 2024/25 the council spent £986,732. During 2025/26 the council spent £234,540.32 on specialist advice (as highlighted in Annex 1) and £2,006,704.38 for one off project delivery (Annex 2). However, the yearly variation is not comparable due to the nature of significant one-off projects in 2025/26. For example, Alliance Leisure Ltd accounted for £1,167,674.40 of the total spend, reflecting the scale and specialist expertise required to develop detailed plans and costings for the proposed replacement Angel Centre. This has included the commissioning of architects, designers, quantity surveyors and marketing support to progress the proposal, without which the project could not be delivered.
- 4.6 A breakdown of the use of external spend by number of projects for each service is shown in the following pie chart:



- 4.7 Services that made the greatest use of external expertise were Central Services which included technical advice for building/renovation projects, legal advice for court matters and planning appeals along with IT related projects where specialists were necessary. In Planning Housing and Environmental Health, services were required to support the development of the Local Plan and for Street Scene Leisure and Technical Services (SSLTS), expertise was required to develop plans in relation to the replacement Angel Centre.
- 4.8 When looking at total spend by each service, SSLTS has the highest overall, as seen in the chart below.



- 4.9 The breakdown of spend in relation to corporate priorities is shown below, with most use in support of “Efficient services for all our residents”



5 Other Options

- 5.1 There are no other options as Members requested the annual report on the costs of external expertise.

6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 6.1 Detailed information regarding the costs is attached at Annex 1 and Annex 2. In terms of spending, over half of all projects (58%) spent £5,000 or less in 2025/26. For those services that have incurred higher spend, these are mostly in relation to significant one-off projects that require specialist skills or projects relating to the emerging Local Plan.

6.2 Using external experts offers time efficient and practical knowledge that is not available internally for a time limited piece of work. It would not be financially viable for a small borough council to employ these specialists directly. This approach ensures value for money and enables significant key projects to be delivered.

7 Risk Assessment

7.1 The risks associated with not using external expertise have been highlighted against each project in Annex 1 and Annex 2.

8 Legal Implications

8.1 Procurement is undertaken in accordance with financial regulations and council procurement frameworks. The use of a Waiver is undertaken in certain circumstances.

9 Consultation and Communications

9.1 There are no further communications plans for this report.

10 Implementation

10.1 External spend will continue to be monitored, with 2026/27 expenditure collated and reported to this Committee during the next financial year.

11 Cross Cutting Issues

11.1 Climate Change and Biodiversity

11.1.1 Limited or low impact on emissions and environment.

11.1.2 Climate change advice has not been sought in the preparation of the options and recommendations in this report.

11.2 Equalities and Diversity

11.2.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

11.3 Other If Relevant

- Procurement
- Business Continuity / Resilience

Background Papers	None
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Annexes	Annex 1 – Operational support providing specialist advice 2025/26 Annex 2 – Activity linked to one-off project delivery 2025/26
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Annex 1: Specialist External Expertise

Spend by service 2025/26

Operational support providing specialist advice

Central Services							
Timing	Provider	Cost of item in 2024/25	Reason for use of consultants, include details of in-house expertise	Monitoring process	Procurement process	Outcome what did the consultants provide/achieve	Risk Any risk associated with not appointing consultants for this project?
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	EW Legal costing Ltd	£350.00	Specialist legal advice on negotiating costs awarded	Communication -various	Direct Approach	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	No in-house specialist adviser on costs negotiation - risk of paying higher costs
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Trowers & Hamlins LLP	£2,757.45	Standard Nominations Agreement	Communication -various	Three Quotes	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	No in house specialist. Risk of not entering appropriate binding clauses in the agreement
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Cornwall Street Barristers	£300.00	Court Hearing	Communication -various	Direct Approach	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of costs
Jan 2025 -	Thomson Snell & Passmore	£392.00	S106 Agreement	Communication -various	Yes- our external lawyers for s106's	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk to the council not being able to enforce the

Mar 2026							obligations if appropriate terms are not drafted into the agreement
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	EW Legal costing Ltd	£450.00	Advising on costs	Communication -various	Direct Approach	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of paying out higher costs
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Thomson Snell & Passmore	£504.00	S106 Deed of Variation	Communication -various	Yes- our external lawyers for s106's	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk to the council not being able to enforce the obligations if appropriate terms are not drafted into the agreement
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Bevan Brittan LLP	£653.00	Specialist legal advice	Communication -various	Direct Approach	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of appeal and costs
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Thomson Snell & Passmore	£1,805.00	Commercial Property legal advice	Communication -various	Direct Approach	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk to council property transaction
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Trowers & Hamlins LLP	£5,894.00	Homelessness Advice	Communication -various	Direct Approach	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of JR/compensation
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	EW Legal costing Ltd	£2,250.00	Costs advice	Communication -various	Direct approach	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of paying higher costs if not negotiated

Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Trowers & Hamblins LLP	£6,957.00	Specialist legal advice	Communication -various	Three Quotes	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of appeal and costs
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Trowers & Hamblins LLP	£837.00	Housing - JR advice	Communication -various	Direct Approach	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of appeal and costs
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Trowers & Hamblins LLP	£1,950.00	Planning specialist advice Planning and Licencing	Communication -various	Three Quotes	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of appeal and costs
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Trowers & Hamblins LLP	£3,334.00	JR specialist advice	Communication -various	Direct Approach	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of compensation/our decision being challenged
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Trowers & Hamblins LLP	£1,763.00	Specialist advice to property services	Communication -various	Direct Approach	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk to council property transaction
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Landmark Chambers	£1,500.00	Specialist advice - Response to Pre-action protocol JR letter	Communication -various	Direct Approach	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	JR risk
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Cornerstone Barristers	£750.00	Housing and Homelessness Advice	Communication -various	Direct Approach	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of costs/compensation
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	39 Essex Chambers	£1,225.00	Urgent advice from Counsel in March by Midday- Planning	Communication -various	Direct approach	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of costs

Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Weightmans LLP	£5,091.50	Court matter - specialist advice	Communication -various	Three Quotes	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of costs
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Bevan Brittan LLP	£2,731.50	Procurement specialist legal advice for Waste contract	Communication -various	Direct	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Contracts compliance risks
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Cornerstone Barristers	£1,625.00	Planning specialist counsel advice - on planning appeal	Communication -various	Three Quotes	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of Costs
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Cornerstone Barristers	£1,375.00	Self build planning application specialist advice	Communication -various	Direct approach	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of applicants not complying with self build and the exemption
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Cornerstone Barristers	£1,125.00	Self-build planning application specialist advice	Communication -various	Direct approach	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of applicants not complying with self build and the exemption
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Cornerstone Barristers	£975.00	Planning advice	Communication -various	Direct approach	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of Costs
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Cornerstone Barristers	£2,000.00	Planning Appeal	Communication -various	Three Quotes	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of Costs
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Cornerstone Barristers	£2,300.00	Planning Appeal	Communication -various	Three Quotes	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of Costs

Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Cornerstone Barristers	£6,540.00	Planning Appeal	Communication -various	Three Quotes	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of Costs
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Francis Taylor Building	£1,250.00	Planning Appeal	Communication -various	Three Quotes	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of Costs
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Cornerstone Barristers	£12,437.50	Planning Appeal	Communication -various	Three Quotes	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of appeal and costs
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Cornerstone Barristers	£1,750.00	Planning specialist advice Planning and Licencing - training	Communication -various	Three Quotes	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of appeal and costs
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Freeths LLP	£1,427.20	Professional fees- BNG advice	Communication -various	Direct approach	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of not making a legally complaint decision
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Six Pump Court	£2,800.00	Counsel attendance and cost report - PC	Communication -various	Direct approach	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of JR if meeting is not legally complaint in decision making
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Six Pump Court	£1,900.00	Counsel attendance - PC	Communication -various	Direct approach	Legal advice provided and matter concluded	Risk of JR if meeting is not legally complaint in decision making

Jan 2025 - ongoing	Wilkes Head & Eve	£12,800.00	Annual asset valuations required to comply with financial reporting standards	Communication / meetings	Service led, quotation sought	Production of annual asset valuations and associated report	Failure to comply with financial reporting standards would mean the Council would not get its accounts signed off by external auditors. The Council does not have a RICS Registered Valuer to undertake the valuations. Several attempts have been made to recruit.
Oct 2025	Phoenix Software Ltd	£1,050.00	Specialist expertise was required to securely migrate and reconfigure email security tooling and to decommission legacy infrastructure. This work required supplier-specific technical knowledge and could not be delivered within existing internal capacity without increased risk.	Reports/meetings	3 quotes from 3 suppliers	Migration of Email management to a set of tools from 2 servers within Azure achieving simple management and a cost saving for the Azure monthly spend	Failure to appoint specialist support would have retained dependency on legacy infrastructure, increasing operational overhead, Azure running costs and the risk of security weaknesses, while placing additional resource pressure on internal IT staff.

Nov 2025	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	£5,000.00	Independent specialist support was required to undertake detailed process mapping and analysis within agreed timescales, supporting service redesign and renewal activity. Internal resources did not have sufficient capacity to complete this work alongside day-to-day service delivery.	Reports/meetings	Annual contract	Creation of process mapping for re-engineering of business process for digital transformation and streamlining services	Failure to appoint specialist support would have limited capacity to undertake comprehensive process mapping within required timescales, increasing the risk that services are renewed or redesigned based on inefficient or outdated processes, reducing opportunities for digital transformation and service improvement
Apr 2025	Idox Software Ltd	£14,875.00	The migration required specialist supplier knowledge of the IDOX platform, data structures and configuration. Use of the system supplier ensured the migration was completed safely, efficiently and in	Reports/meetings/engagement completion	Part of the IDOX migration project	Delivery of the IDOX migration project, including data transfer and platform configuration, enabling secure transition to the new system, maintaining business continuity and	Without specialist supplier support, there was a risk of incomplete or failed system migration, data integrity issues and extended service disruption, potentially impacting statutory service delivery and

			line with vendor best practice, reducing delivery and data integrity risks.			supporting ongoing service delivery.	increasing remediation costs.
May 2025	Idox Software Ltd	£12,775.00	The migration required specialist supplier knowledge of the IDOX platform, data structures and configuration. Use of the system supplier ensured the migration was completed safely, efficiently and in line with vendor best practice, reducing delivery and data integrity risks.	Reports/meetings/engagement completion	Part of the IDOX migration project	Delivery of the IDOX migration project, including data transfer and platform configuration, enabling secure transition to the new system, maintaining business continuity and supporting ongoing service delivery.	Without specialist supplier support, there was a risk of incomplete or failed system migration, data integrity issues and extended service disruption, potentially impacting statutory service delivery and increasing remediation costs.
May 2025	Idox Software Ltd	£13,350.00	The migration required specialist supplier knowledge of the IDOX platform, data structures and configuration. Use of the system supplier ensured the migration was completed safely,	Reports/meetings/engagement completion	Part of the IDOX migration project	Delivery of the IDOX migration project, including data transfer and platform configuration, enabling secure transition to the new system, maintaining business	Without specialist supplier support, there was a risk of incomplete or failed system migration, data integrity issues and extended service disruption, potentially impacting statutory service delivery and

			efficiently and in line with vendor best practice, reducing delivery and data integrity risks.			continuity and supporting ongoing service delivery.	increasing remediation costs.
Nov 2025	Civica UK Ltd	£2,761.00	Specialist supplier involvement was required to complete a secure database migration in line with product requirements and security best practice. This activity could not be undertaken internally due to software-specific knowledge and vendor terms.	Engagement completion	Part of the Mod Gov contract	Successful migration to the new database server with minimal downtime, business interruption and full compliance with the vendors maintenance contracts and SLAs	Not appointing the supplier to complete the database migration would have increased the risk of non-compliance with security and data protection requirements, continued reliance on legacy infrastructure, and potential system instability affecting governance processes.
Sep 2025	Total Mobile Limited	£1,450.00	Supplier support was required to implement and configure the mobile working solution in line with contractual specifications. This ensured the platform was	Engagement completion	Part of the contract for the solution	Successful upgrade to the mobile solution platform	Increased cost, weakened security and unsupported mobile working solution resulting in compliance failure and security breach risks

			correctly deployed, supported and optimised for operational use.				
Apr 2025	Agile Applications Ltd	£3,600.00	The migration required specialist supplier knowledge of the IDOX platform, data structures and configuration. Use of the system supplier ensured the migration was completed safely, efficiently and in line with vendor best practice, reducing delivery and data integrity risks.	Reports/meetings/engagement completion	Part of the IDOX migration project	Delivery of the IDOX migration project, including data transfer and platform configuration, enabling secure transition to the new system, maintaining business continuity and supporting ongoing service delivery.	Not securing specialist data migration support would have increased the risk of data quality issues, data loss or delays during transition, impacting business continuity and confidence in the new system.
Apr 2025	CyberSmart Ltd	£2,050.00	An independent, accredited assessor was required to conduct the Cyber Essentials Plus audit. Certification cannot be self-assessed and must be completed by a qualified	Reports/meetings	3 quotes from 3 suppliers	Regulatory audit for the Cyber Essentials Plus security compliance	Failure to appoint an accredited external auditor would have prevented certification, increasing organisational cyber risk, impacting assurance to stakeholders, and limiting eligibility for

			external organisation.				certain contracts or partnerships.
Sep 2025	CyberSmart Ltd	£675.00	External consultancy was required to carry out the Cyber Essentials assessment, as certification must be validated independently to provide assurance of compliance.	Reports/meetings	3 quotes from 3 suppliers	Regulatory audit for the Cyber Essentials security compliance	Without an independent certification audit, the organisation would have been unable to demonstrate baseline cyber security compliance, increasing exposure to cyber risk and reducing external assurance
Feb 2026	Kocho Group	£493.12	Specialist consultancy was required to configure Microsoft Purview, including the creation of a Purview dashboard and implementation of data classification and compliance controls. This work required advanced platform expertise and could not be delivered solely through in-house resources within	Reports/meetings	3 quotes from 3 suppliers	Creation of Data identification and classification portal to identify PII, sensitive information and regulatory compliance	Failure to implement specialist configuration support would have limited visibility and control over sensitive and personal data, increasing compliance risk under GDPR, the likelihood of data breaches, and reliance on less effective manual controls.

			the required timescales.				
Feb 2026	Kocho Group	£432.50	Specialist consultancy was required to configure Microsoft Purview, including the creation of a Purview dashboard and implementation of data classification and compliance controls. This work required advanced platform expertise and could not be delivered solely through in-house resources within the required timescales.	Reports/meetings	3 quotes from 3 suppliers	Creation of Data identification and classification portal to identify PII, sensitive information and regulatory compliance	Failure to implement specialist configuration support would have limited visibility and control over sensitive and personal data, increasing compliance risk under GDPR, the likelihood of data breaches, and reliance on less effective manual controls.

Mar 2026	Kocho Group	£2,319.12	Specialist consultancy was required to configure Microsoft Purview, including the creation of a Purview dashboard and implementation of data classification and compliance controls. This work required advanced platform expertise and could not be delivered solely through in-house resources within the required timescales.	Reports/meetings	3 quotes from 3 suppliers	Creation of Data identification and classification portal to identify PII, sensitive information and regulatory compliance	Failure to implement specialist configuration support would have limited visibility and control over sensitive and personal data, increasing compliance risk under GDPR, the likelihood of data breaches, and reliance on less effective manual controls.
Mar 2026	Kocho Group	£432.50	Specialist consultancy was required to configure Microsoft Purview, including the creation of a Purview dashboard and implementation of data classification and compliance	Reports/meetings	3 quotes from 3 suppliers	Creation of Data identification and classification portal to identify PII, sensitive information and regulatory compliance	Failure to implement specialist configuration support would have limited visibility and control over sensitive and personal data, increasing compliance risk under GDPR, the

			controls. This work required advanced platform expertise and could not be delivered solely through in-house resources within the required timescales.				likelihood of data breaches, and reliance on less effective manual controls.
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Executive Services

Timing	Provider	Cost of item in 2024/25	Reason for use of consultants, include details of in-house expertise	Monitoring process	Procurement process	Outcome what did the consultants provide/achieve	Risk Any risk associated with not appointing consultants for this project?
Jan 2025	Focus On Banking	£4,400.00	Review of Banking & Merchant Acquiring Arrangements	Review reports	Service led	Expert Advice	Risk of inaccurate assessment of value for money
Jan 2025	Airey Consultancy Services Ltd	£1,390.00	Provision of Consultancy Support and creation of Full Council Tax S13A 1A Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2025 & 2026	Communications / Meetings / Review draft reports	Service led	Expert Advice	Potential for delay in implementation of policy
Jan 2025	MUFG Corporate Markets Treasury Limited	£12,120.00	Advice on accounting for corporate leases. Consultancy payment covers 2025/26 to 2027/28 financial years.	Review reports	Service led	Expert Advice	Risk of inaccurate tax reporting

PHEH

Timing	Provider	Cost of item in 2024/25	Reason for use of consultants, include details of in-house expertise	Monitoring process	Procurement process	Outcome what did the consultants provide/achieve	Risk Any risk associated with not appointing consultants for this project?
Ongoing	TSC Structural Engineering Consultant	£17,000.00	To assess and check structural designs submitted as part of Building Control process.	Communications / assess responses.	No procurement process - historic and ongoing service provider	Satisfactory checking of structural designs submitted as part of Building control process	Significant risk of structural failure on projects under Councils Building Control process.
Jan 2025	Veritas Pest Consultancy	£4,408.00	Expert advice re fly control and species identification (no expertise internally)	Reports/meetings	No Member involvement. Quotations obtained.	Provision of expert support in complaint investigation which is ongoing	Our lack of expertise in this area would lead to less well informed judgements in the complaint investigation.
Sep 2025 – Mar 2026	Consultant Building Safety Officer	£18,172.93	To investigate and inspect relevant mid or high rise buildings to support building safety enforcement. To carry out any appropriate enforcement.	Meetings/MHCLG monitoring/statutory returns	Partnership approach with Tunbridge Wells BC	Report due to be prepared for MT/Members on project	Failure to adequately resource could have resulted in Government intervention as specific funding was provided.

SSLTS

Timing	Provider	Cost of item in 2024/25	Reason for use of consultants, include details of in-house expertise	Monitoring process	Procurement process	Outcome what did the consultants provide/achieve	Risk Any risk associated with not appointing consultants for this project?
Sep 2025 - Feb 2026	Roads and Sewers for Planning and Design	£585	Aylesford Car Park Design and Planning Support	Commissioning Officer	Services Led	Successful submission of a validated planning application	Unable to progress planning application within established timeframe
Feb 2026 - Jul 2026	DHA Planning Ltd	£7,250	Appointment of Planning Consultant to progress planning application	Commissioning Officer	Services Led	Successful submission of a validated planning application	Unable to progress planning application within established timeframe
Annual	Roads and Sewers for Planning and Design	£4,285	Quarterly and Annual inspection of bridges	Commissioning Officer	Services Led	Structural report with recommendations produced	Risk to the public - TMBC asset becoming hazardous to users
Mar 2026	Roads and Sewers for Planning and Design	£2,000	Structural inspection of bridge locations 1 and 8 to be completed in January and March 2026	Commissioning Officer	Services Led	Structural report with recommendations produced	Risk to the public - TMBC asset becoming hazardous to users
Mar 2026	Roads and Sewers for Planning and Design	£1,000	Structural inspection of bridge locations 10 and 11 to be completed in January and March 2026	Commissioning Officer	Services Led	Structural report with recommendations produced	Risk to the public - TMBC asset becoming hazardous to users

Feb 2026	Roads and Sewers for Planning and Design	£1,550	Independent assessment of removal method statement and risk assessment for Shallows Bridge Haysden	Commissioning Officer	Services Led	Written report with recommendations produced	Ensuring a safe system of work was adopted for the removal of the bridge.
Jul 2025	Aegaea Limited	£970	Flood risk assessment	Commissioning Officer	Services Led	Provision of reports for inclusion in planning application	Unable to progress planning application
Mar 2026	PJC Consultancy	£1,895	Arboricultural and Ecological Survey	Commissioning Officer	Services Led	Provision of reports for inclusion in planning application	Unable to progress planning application
Jul 2025 - Mar 2026	Adonis Blue Environmental Consultants	£4,452	Baseline BNG Assessments and Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan	Commissioning Officer	Services Led	Provision on BNG calculation to include with planning application	Unable to progress planning application

Annex 2: Specialist External Expertise

Spend by service 2025/26

Activities linked to one off project delivery

Central Services							
	Provider	Cost of item in 2024/25	Reason for use of consultants, include details of in-house expertise	Monitoring process	Procurement process	Outcome what did the consultants provide/achieve	Risk Any risk associated with not appointing consultants for this project?
Mar - Apr 2026	Planning Solutions Consulting	£9,950.00	OSG requirement to establish whether running an inhouse cafe at Tonbridge Castle is viable	Report to MT	Service led, 3 quotes and Member approval. Procurement advised process	Delivered a detailed report to support members in making a decision on whether to deliver a cafe at the Castle	Risk would be that either a decision could not be made on a decision was made without appropriate data and reference sites being presented
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	HMY Architects	£12,360.00	To provide architectural services in respect of Gibson East refurbishment	Communications / meetings / project group monitoring	Service led, quotations sought	Leading the design team, undertaking architectural services, producing	No in-house expertise for architectural services. Risk of not engaging architects would be poor

						designs/drawings, including the role of Principal Designer under Construction and Design Management Regulations and acting as Contract Administrator under the build contract	designs being produced leading to increased uncertainty, increased costs and likelihood of plans not complying with planning or building regulations
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	CTP Consulting Engineers	£6,718.00	To provide structural and civil engineering services in respect of Gibson East refurbishment	Communications / meetings / project group monitoring	Service led, quotations sought	Undertaking structural and civil design services, including producing designs/drawings	No in-house expertise for these services. Risk of not engaging engineers would be works which were not compliant with building regulations and could potentially be unsafe for building users
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Hawden	£846.00	To provide mechanical, electrical and public health design services in respect	Communications / meetings / project group monitoring	Service led, quotations sought	Undertaking mechanical, electrical and public health design services, including	No in-house expertise for these services. Risk of not engaging engineers would be works which were not

			of Gibson East refurbishment			producing designs/drawings	compliant with building regulations and could potentially lead to delivery of non-compliant building services, which could be unsafe for building users
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Betteridge & Milsom	£18,320.00	To provide quantity surveyor services in respect of Gibson East refurbishment	Communications / meetings / project group monitoring	Service led, quotations sought	Undertaking quantity surveyor services including producing cost plans, contract documentation and valuations	No in-house expertise for these services. Risk of not engaging QS would lead to a lack of financial control and oversight, resulting in higher costs
Jan 2025 - Mar 2026	Arthian	£38,712.00	To provide technical mechanical and electrical advice and project management services in relation to the installation of air source heat pumps at Larkfield Leisure Centre. Costs being met by external grant funding	Communications / meetings / project group monitoring	Framework appointment	Providing technical mechanical and electrical advice and project management services in relation to the installation of air source heat pumps at Larkfield Leisure Centre	No in-house expertise for mechanical and electrical. Risk of not engaging specialists would be poor decisions being made during the course of the work leading to issues effecting the operation of the site
Jan 2025 -	Hawden	£9,398.00	To provide technical mechanical and electrical advice in	Communications / meetings / project group monitoring	Service led, quotations sought	Undertaking mechanical, electrical and	No in-house expertise for these services. Risk of not

Mar 2026			relation to the installation of air source heat pumps at Poulton Wood Golf Centre. Costs being met by external grant funding			public health design services, including producing designs/drawings	engaging engineers would be works which were not compliant with building regulations and could potentially lead to delivery of non-compliant building services, which could be unsafe for building users
Oct 2025	Phlorum	£5,255.00	Site feasibility assessments in relation to the temporary accommodation scheme at Blue Bell Hill	Communication / meetings	Service led, quotation sought	Production of reports to inform design and planning for scheme	Failure to undertake these surveys may have resulted in planning permission not being granted or incorrect assumptions being made during the design phase
Jan 2025 - Jul 2025	Temple	£10,472.00	Site feasibility assessments in relation to the temporary accommodation scheme at Blue Bell Hill	Communication / meetings	Service led, quotation sought	Production of reports to inform design and planning for scheme	Failure to undertake these surveys may have resulted in planning permission not being granted or incorrect assumptions being made during the design phase
Jan 2025 -	PJA	£3,500.00	Site feasibility assessments in relation to the	Communication / meetings	Service led, quotation sought	Production of reports to inform design and	Failure to undertake these surveys may have resulted in

Jul 2025			temporary accommodation scheme at Blue Bell Hill			planning for scheme	planning permission not being granted or incorrect assumptions being made during the design phase
Jan 2025 - ongoing	Project Centre	£21,842.00	Design services in relation to the lighting of the riverside path between Tonbridge town lock and Canon Lane	Communication / meetings	Service led, quotation sought	Production of lighting designs and procurement documentation	No in-house expertise to produce lighting designs. Failure to produce detailed designs may lead to lighting being installed which is not compliant with planning or environmental requirements or not provide an adequate level of light

Executive Services

Timing	Provider	Cost of item in 2024/25	Reason for use of consultants, include details of in-house expertise	Monitoring process	Procurement process	Outcome what did the consultants provide/achieve	Risk Any risk associated with not appointing consultants for this project?
Jan 2025	GLL	£25,000.00	This scheme was funded in its entirety through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (external funding) and was a time-limited opportunity to deliver support to our local businesses - the consultants were required to provide expertise and additional capacity in order to deliver services which included business mentoring support, a small grant programme for start-up businesses as well as workshops and events.	Monthly meetings (involving reports containing outputs and outcomes) with the consultants initially, becoming weekly meetings in the lead up to the West Kent Expo event (Sept-2025 - March 2026).	A West Kent Partnership initiative (to provide economies of scale) - procurement led by Sevenoaks District Council in partnership with TWBC and TMBC. Full tender process undertaken in January/February 2025.	In total, GLL supported 273 West Kent Businesses through direct advice and support (88 from T&M), provided 60 West Kent Businesses with 8-hours+ of 1-2-1 mentoring (20 in T&M), delivered 10 workshops and the West Kent Expo event in Tonbridge on 11 March 2026 which attracted over 550 visitors. GLL also administered a micro-grants scheme supporting 30 businesses with small-scale financial support (10 in T&M).	<p>Non-delivery of a project that formed a part of the broader UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme for 2025/26.</p> <p>Reduced support for local businesses at a time when the economy is not particularly strong.</p> <p>No West Kent Expo event, which could have resulted in some negative PR.</p>

PHEH

Timing	Provider	Cost of item in 2024/25	Reason for use of consultants, include details of in-house expertise	Monitoring process	Procurement process	Outcome what did the consultants provide/achieve	Risk Any risk associated with not appointing consultants for this project?
Jun 2025	JACOBS	£43,502.60	To prepare transport modelling evidence including transport assessment for the emerging Local Plan.	Communications / Meetings / Review draft reports.	Kent County Council Highway Services Framework.	Work ongoing, transport forecast baseline, LTC and M2 J3 sensitivity tests and scenario test reports provided so far.	Failure to address transport issues and identify appropriate mitigation could result in failure of the Local Plan.
Dec 2019 - ongoing	DHA Transport	£14,950.00	To prepare an Active Travel Strategy including route audits, to align with the emerging Local Plan.	Communications / Meetings / Review draft reports.	Service led, quotations sought from three providers with wavers and contract extensions agreed.	Draft Active Travel Strategy, walking and cycling route audits prepared.	This study is required to improve walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure across the borough, to help mitigate the transport impacts of growth identified in the Local Plan, tackle congestion and support climate change ambitions.
Feb 2022-ongoing	ARC4	£14,650.00	To prepare a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment and	Communications / Meetings / Review draft reports.	Service led, quotations sought from three providers	Draft gypsy and traveller need assessment and site assessment reports prepared.	Failure to address gypsy and traveller accommodation requirements in the Local Plan could result

			undertake related site assessments.		with wavers and contract extensions agreed.		in failure of the Local Plan.
Oct 2025 - ongoing	Land Use Consulting	£37,826.95	To prepare a Sustainability Appraisal to support the Local Plan.	Communications / Meetings / Review draft reports.	ESPO Framework.	Interim Sustainability Appraisal report prepared.	Failure to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal could result in failure of the Local Plan.
Apr 2025 – ongoing	Ove Arup & Partners	£186,950.58	To prepare a Stage 1 and Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment to support the Local Plan.	Communications / Meetings / Review draft reports.	JCT Framework.	Stage 1 Green Belt Assessment and Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment reports prepared.	Green Belt Assessments are necessary to assess the performance of Green Belt in the borough and identify areas of provisional grey belt.
Nov 2023 - ongoing	Enplan	£81,392.50	To prepare landscape evidence to support the spatial strategy and site allocation process.	Communications / Meetings / Review draft reports.	Invitation to Tender process.	Landscape Character Assessment, Landscape Sensitivity Assessment, Landscape and Visual Appraisal and Green Gap Study.	There is a need to consider landscape impacts and potential mitigation measures when considering sites for inclusion in the Local Plan.
Jul 2023 - ongoing	AECOM	£69,591.60	To prepare a Habitat Regulations Assessment and Combined Impact Assessment. To also prepare an Air Quality Report to consider the impacts of increased traffic as a	Communications / Meetings / Review draft reports.	Invitation to Tender process.	Habitat Regulations Assessment, Air Quality Report and Combined Impact Assessment Report.	Failure to undertake a Habitat Regulations Assessment and Combined Impact Assessment could result in failure of the Local Plan.

			result of the growth and provide climate change policy advice.				
Jan 2025 - ongoing	ICENI	£25,166.00	A Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) is intended to provide an assessment of both housing need and demand.	Communications / Meetings / Review draft reports.	Invitation to Tender process.	Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) report prepared.	The SHMA is a vital evidence base document so failure to undertake a SHMA would result in failure of the Local Plan.
Mar 2025 - ongoing	ICENI	£16,858.00	The Housing Market Delivery Study is intended to inform and support the Local Plan's spatial strategy by providing evidence and understanding of housing delivery issues.	Communications / Meetings / Review draft reports.	Service led, quotations sought from three providers with subsequent contract extension.	Housing Market Delivery Study report prepared.	The Housing Market Delivery Study is a vital evidence base document so failure to undertake a SHMA would result in failure of the Local Plan.
May 2025 - Dec 2028	Ove Arup & Partners	£24,963.00	This Study updates the assessment of the ability of Tonbridge and Mailing to deliver housing whilst also taking account of known capacity and constraints with the assumption that some Green Belt land will be released.	Communications / Meetings / Review draft reports.	Invitation to Tender process.	Housing Constraints Assessment report prepared.	The Housing Constraints Assessment is a vital evidence base document so failure to undertake a SHMA would result in failure of the Local Plan.

Sep 2025 - ongoing	BNP Paribas	£22,047.00	The whole plan Viability Study tests the ability of a range of development typologies and strategic sites to absorb the policy requirements in the emerging Plan, alongside other national standards.	Communications / Meetings / Review draft reports.	Invitation to Tender process.	Viability Study report prepared.	The Viability Study is a vital evidence base document so failure to undertake a SHMA would result in failure of the Local Plan.
Sep 2021 - ongoing	Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners	£36,894.00	To prepare Economy and Town Centres Studies to inform the emerging Local Plan. Limited in-house capacity/expertise.	Communications / Meetings / Review draft reports.	Service led, quotations sought from three providers with wavers agreed for fee extensions.	Draft Economy and Town Centres reports prepared.	Failure to address employment and retail matters, including the allocation of sufficient employment floorspace could result in failure of the Local Plan.
Jun 2023 - Mar 2025	Plozaski Lynch Consulting	£2,472.00	To prepare Indoor and Outdoor Sport, Recreation and Open Space Strategies. Limited in-house capacity/expertise.	Communications / Meetings / Review draft reports.	Service led, quotations sought from three providers.	Draft reports received for indoor and outdoor sport, recreation and open space provision. Subject to review and further updates before publication.	Failure to address sport recreation and open space issues in the Local Plan could result in failure of the Local Plan.
May 2024- ongoing	Issuu	£912.75	Software that converts PDFs into customizable digital flipbooks that can be shared via links or embedded into	Not applicable.	Direct purchase.	Conversion of key consultation PDF documents into easy to read digital flipbooks, used as part of the online	It is important that the Local Plan consultation is as accessible as possible, easy to read digital documents is an

			websites including the Commonplace platform.			Local Plan consultation.	important part of achieving this.
Feb 2024 - ongoing	Commonplace Digital	£12,480.00	Provision of online consultation and engagement platform for the Local Plan.	Communication / meetings.	Crown Commercial Service G-Cloud 13 Framework.	The supplier has provided their engagement platform to host Local Plan consultations, technical support and data outputs / analysis.	It is important that the Local Plan consultation is as accessible as possible. A high quality online platform is an important part of achieving this.
Sep 2021- Sep 2027	Urban Intelligence	£38,000.00	To provide access to the online Placemaker platform which assists with the preparation of the council's Land Availability Assessment including call for sites events. In addition the preparation of an Urban Capacity Study.	Communications / Meetings / Review draft reports.	Most recent contract award made via Crown Commercial Service G-Cloud 13 Framework.	The supplier has prepared the Urban Capacity Study and continues to provide access to the Placemaker platform, which is accessed by the policy team and members of the public via the council's planning policy webpages.	It is important to provide a high quality online service for customers for call for sites events. Placemaker assists the council in completing its Land Availability Assessment which is an important evidence base for the Local Plan.

Jun 2025 - ongoing	Urban Graphics	£48,000.00	Graphic design of the publication draft of the Local Plan for Regulation 12 stage 2.	Communications / Meetings / Review draft reports.	Service led, quotations sought from three providers.	Publication draft of the Local Plan Regulation 18 stage 2 document published for public consultation in November 2025.	It is important that the Local Plan consultation is as accessible as possible. A high quality publication draft Local Plan document is an important part of achieving this.
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SSLTS

Timing	Provider	Cost of item in 2024/25	Reason for use of consultants, include details of in-house expertise	Monitoring process	Procurement process	Outcome what did the consultants provide/achieve	Risk Any risk associated with not appointing consultants for this project?
Apr 2025 - Mar 2026	Alliance Leisure Ltd	£1,167,674.40	Expertise and capacity to develop detailed plan and costs for proposed replacement Angel Centre through RIBA stages 2 & 3 to include planning detail, use of architects, designers, main contractor, quantity surveyor and marketing support.	Town Centre Programme Board, internal officer group and Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Waiver granted based on previous detailed work undertaken and use of the UK Leisure Framework. Cabinet agreement of the procurement route.	Completion of RIBA stages 2 & 3 to support progression of project design and cost confidence. Including use of architects, designers, main contractor, quantity surveyor and planning and marketing support.	Creation and management of new facility fails to meet objectives and fails to contribute return on investment as expected resulting in financial loss and loss of opportunities for residents.

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

25 June 2026

Part 1 - Public

Matters for Information



Cabinet Member	Cllr Robin Betts, Cabinet Member for Housing, Environment and Economy
Responsible Officer	Damian Roberts, Chief Executive
Report Author	Jeremy Whittaker, Economic Development and Special Projects Manager
	Luisa Marafon, Economic Development Officer

UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme 2025/26

1 Summary and Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report provides information about the recently completed UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Programme in Tonbridge and Malling, setting out the positive impact on local residents and businesses of the various projects that have been supported.

2 Corporate Strategy Priority Area

- 2.1 'Investing in our local economy to help support residents and businesses and foster sustainable growth' and 'Sustaining a borough which cares for the Environment'.
- 2.2 Whilst the programme has had a positive bearing on all four priority areas within the Corporate Strategy 2023-2027, its impact has been most acutely felt on the priority areas relating to the economy and the environment due to support for initiatives such as the Green Business Grant Scheme, West Kent Business Support Programme, Leisure Centre Carbon Descent Plans and Tonbridge Town Centre Regeneration.

3 Introduction and Background

- 3.1 In the Autumn 2024 Budget, Government stated that the UK Shared Prosperity Fund would continue for a 12-month period from April 2025 to March 2026, but with reduced funding of £900m (a £600m reduction in comparison to 2024/25).

- 3.2 In December 2024, Government released details about the one-year extension and provided details about the funding allocation across the country. Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council was allocated a sum of £327,146, which was the minimum allocation, and similar in level to the majority of Kent lower-tier authorities.
- 3.3 Following consultation with partner organisations, a proposed programme of socio-economic projects for 2025/26 was put together, using the UKSPF allocation. This programme was approved by Cabinet in March 2025 (Minute [CB25/29](#) refers).

4 UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme 2025/26

- 4.1 The Tonbridge and Malling UKSPF Programme set out a wide range of projects for 2025/26, which are set out in **Table 1** below:

UKSPF Priority	Project	Description	Capital	Revenue	Total
Communities and Place	Youth Provision	Maintaining outreach and summer programme work.	£0	£18,000	£18,000
	Mobile CCTV	Continuation of scheme – funding to move cameras	£0	£4,000	£4,000
	Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Enforcement Team	Set-up of an Enforcement Team to tackle ASB in the borough.	£0	£45,000	£45,000
	Community Development Grant Scheme	A further round of the popular Community Grants Scheme.	£0	£76,660	£76,660
	Tonbridge Town Centre Regeneration	Contribution towards regeneration plans	£0	£30,000	£30,000
		Riverside Walk lighting scheme plans	£0	£20,000	£20,000
	Carbon Descent Plans	Ongoing capital work at our leisure centres.	£30,000	£0	£30,000
Supporting Local Business	Green Business Grant Scheme	Round 5 of the scheme to support organisations to reduce emissions	£30,401	£0	£30,401
	West Kent Business Support Programme	Funding covering micro-grants, mentoring support and events (including Expo 26)	£0	£25,000	£25,000
People and Skills	People and Skills Fund	Round 2 of scheme to support people closer to employment	£0	£35,000	£35,000
Man & Admin		If at 4%	£0	£13,085	£13,085
Total			£60,401	£266,745	£327,146

Table 1: Tonbridge and Malling UKSPF Programme 2025/26

4.2 The programme did not change a great deal as it progressed over the course of 2025/26, with the main amendments to the programme being:

- **Capital:** An underspend on the Green Business Grant Scheme that was transferred over to the Carbon Descent Plans project. The underspend of UKSPF funding arose from non-delivery of projects by businesses that had been offered a grant.
- **Revenue:** An underspend on the Riverside Walk and Mobile CCTV projects that was transferred over to the People and Skills Project. The underspend of UKSPF for the Riverside Walk project arose from a need to prioritise spending time-limited s.106 funding, and the small underspend of UKSPF funding on the Mobile CCTV project arose from one of the cameras being out of action for a short period.

4.3 As such, the final programme expenditure is only slightly different to the original programme, with no new projects brought into the programme:

Project	Description	UKSPF Funding Spend		% of Original Budget Spent
		Capital	Revenue	
Youth Provision	Diversionary activities to reduce ASB amongst young people		£18,000	100%
Mobile CCTV	Installation of mobile cameras to tackle ASB		£3,215	80.4%
ASB Enforcement Team	Funding to contribute towards the cost of the enforcement officers.		£45,000	100%
Community Development Grant Scheme	Grants to support community activities and volunteering.		£76,660	100%
Tonbridge Town Centre Review – Regeneration Plans	Funding contribution towards the masterplan for the regeneration of the area east of the High Street.		£30,000	100%
Tonbridge Town Centre Review – Riverside Walk	New lighting scheme between Town Lock and Vale Road, Tonbridge.		£9,195	46.0%
Carbon Descent Plans	Capital investment to support our Leisure Centres in their journey towards Net Zero.	£46,257		154.2%
Green Business Grant Scheme	Grants of up to £5,000 to support local business to reduce their carbon footprint.	£14,144		46.5%
West Kent Business Support Programme	Support and advice service for small and micro-businesses, including networking events, seminars and mentoring.		£25,000	100%
People and Skills Fund	Initiatives to support unemployed residents to take steps towards finding work.		£47,483	135.7%

Management and Administration	Contribution towards programme management.		£12,192	93.2%
TOTAL			£327,146	100%

Table 2: Position at the end of 2025/26

5 Key Headlines

5.1 An evaluation of the 2025/26 UKSPF activities is provided in **Annex 1**. This evaluation highlights the following:

- 100% of the budget was spent on delivering projects that support local residents and businesses.
- For every £1 of UKSPF and REPF funding spent, just over £2.70 of match-funding was secured towards local projects. For UKSPF funding alone, the figure was £3.40 of match-funding for every £1 spent.
- 1,475 residents engaged through community safety projects.
- 415 people supported through the Council's People and Skills projects, with 276 people taking part in basic skills training and 36 specifically gaining a qualification.
- 300 local volunteering opportunities generated through financially supporting 57 community projects through the Community Development Grant Scheme.
- 138 businesses benefitting from non-financial support, with 13 businesses receiving grants (10 from the West Kent Business Support Programme and 3 Green Business Grants).
- 4 investments into green infrastructure (Air Source Heat Pumps at Larkfield Leisure Centre and 3 Green Business Grants).
- Part-funded feasibility studies for 2 regeneration projects (Tonbridge Masterplan and Tonbridge Riverside Walk).

5.2 As a result of the initiatives that were delivered under the 'Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Communities' category, reporting of neighbourhood crimes actually increased rather than decreased. This is predominantly due to the impact of the Community Enforcement Team, which greatly increased engagement with communities.

6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

6.1 This report covers matters for information and as such does not have financial and value for money considerations. However, it should be noted that the UKSPF

Programme has supported a number of corporate priorities, which has had a positive impact on council budgets.

7 Risk Assessment

7.1 A Risk Register was regularly reviewed and updated for the duration of the programme and was used to effectively mitigate risk. The main risks set out in the register were:

- Lack of resilience in staffing the programme.
- Non-compliance with UKSPF procurement and publicity requirements.
- Non-delivery of projects.
- Low take-up or fraudulent claiming of grants.

7.2 The register helped to inform the contingency measures that were approved in November 2025 and put in place to ensure the successful delivery of the programme.

8 Legal Implications

8.1 As this report covers matters for information on a programme that has now completed, there are no legal implications arising from this report.

9 Consultation and Communications

9.1 Now that the programme has been completed and the final government return has been submitted, the Council's UKSPF webpage has been updated and information provided to the Communications Department to put on the Council's social media channels.

10 Cross Cutting Issues

10.1 Climate Change and Biodiversity

10.1.1 Some impact on reducing emissions in support of carbon neutral by 2030 or enhancing the natural environment.

10.1.2 In line with the Council's Climate Change Strategy, there were a number of initiatives funded within this programme that have had a positive impact on reducing carbon emissions. These include the Green Business Grant Scheme and Carbon Descent Plans for Larkfield Leisure Centre.

10.2 Equalities and Diversity

10.2.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Background Papers	None
Annexes	Annex 1 – UKSPF Programme 25/26 Evaluation Report



UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Programme Evaluation Report 2025-26

DELIVERING FOR OUR LOCAL BUSINESSES AND COMMUNITIES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TEAM, TMBC



Introduction

This evaluation report gives an overview of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council's UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan for 2025/26, providing information on the individual projects and the outputs and outcomes achieved. Projects within the Investment Plan were delivered by a number of teams from across the Council (Property Services; Economic Development; and Corporate Policy and Communities) with support from Finance and Audit, Legal, and IT Services and overseen by the Economic Development team.

Tonbridge and Malling UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) 2025-26

Following on from the successful delivery of the Tonbridge and Malling UKSPF Investment Plan 2022-2025, the UK's Autumn Budget of 2025 announced a further £900 million of funding from Government to be spent on local investment opportunities by March 2026.

Five UK-wide themes and twelve sub-themes were identified to replace previous interventions from which funding recipients could use to shape their local investment plans.

These were:

1. Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Communities
 - a. Improve health and wellbeing
 - b. Reduce crime and the fear of crime
 - c. Bringing communities together, tackling homelessness
2. Thriving Places
 - a. Development of the visitor economy
 - b. High streets and town centres improvements
3. Support for Business
 - a. Advice and support for business
 - b. Enterprise culture and start up support
 - c. Business sites and premises
4. Employability
 - a. Supporting people to progress towards and into employment
 - b. Support for young people who are or at risk of being NEET
5. Skills
 - a. Essential skills (including numeracy, literacy, ESOL and digital)
 - b. Employment related skills

New Allocation of Funding

By March 2025, the Government had allocated the Council a total of £461,357 in funding with a break down, as follows:

Allocation 2025-26	Funding
UKSPF Core Capital	£60,401
UKSPF Core Revenue	£266,745
REPF Capital	£134,211
Total	£461,357

Programme of Delivery

Due to the tight timescales involved with only a twelve-month window for delivery, it was agreed that the continuation of successful existing UK Shared Prosperity Fund initiatives would allow for greatest impact.

The following local investment plan was agreed by Cabinet in March 2025:

Table 1. Overview of projects with target outcomes and outputs

Project	Description	Delivery body	Target Outcomes	Target Outputs	Total allocation	Project status
Youth Provision	Maintaining outreach and summer programme work	Salus	100 fewer neighbourhood crimes reported	1500 number of people benefiting directly	£18,000	Complete
Mobile CCTV	Continuation of scheme – funding to move cameras	TMBC			£4,000	Complete
Community Enforcement Team	Set-up of an Enforcement Team to tackle anti-social behaviour in the borough	Kingdom Services Group			£45,000	Complete
Community Development Grant Scheme	A further round of the popular Community Grants Scheme	TMBC	40 volunteering opportunities created as a result of support	54 number of organisations receiving grants	£76,660	Complete
Tonbridge Town Centre Review	Contribution towards Review plans	Mace	2 projects arising from funded feasibility studies	2 feasibility studies developed as a result of support	£30,000	Complete
	Riverside Walk lighting scheme plans	Project Centre Ltd			£20,000	Complete

Table 1. Overview of projects with target outcomes and outputs

Carbon Descent Plans	Ongoing capital work at our leisure centres	DMA Maintenance Ltd	3000 increased users of facilities	1 facility improved	£30,000	Complete
Green Business Grant Scheme	Round 5 of the scheme which supports organisations to reduce emissions	TMBC	4 jobs safeguarded as a result of support; 4 new to the firm technologies	4 low or zero carbon energy infrastructure installed; 4 enterprises receiving grants	£30,401	Complete
West Kent Business Support Programme	Funding covering mentoring support and events (including Expo '26)	GLL	20 enterprises with improved productivity	10 enterprises receiving grants; 150 enterprises receiving non-financial support	£25,000	Complete
People and Skills Fund	Round 2 of scheme to support people closer to employment	TMBC	50 people with basic skills following support; 20 people gaining a qualification; 50 improved interpersonal skills	150 people reached; 50 people supported to access basic skills courses	£35,000	Complete
				Total UKSPF allocation	£314,061	

Budget versus Spend

The series of charts below demonstrates the UKSPF budget allocated per project versus actual UKSPF spend. Data is split between five charts, four are grouped according to their relation to the Government’s investment priorities, and the fifth West Kent Rural Grant is included separately as funding was through the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF), which is treated as an addendum to the UKSPF Programme.

Chart 1.

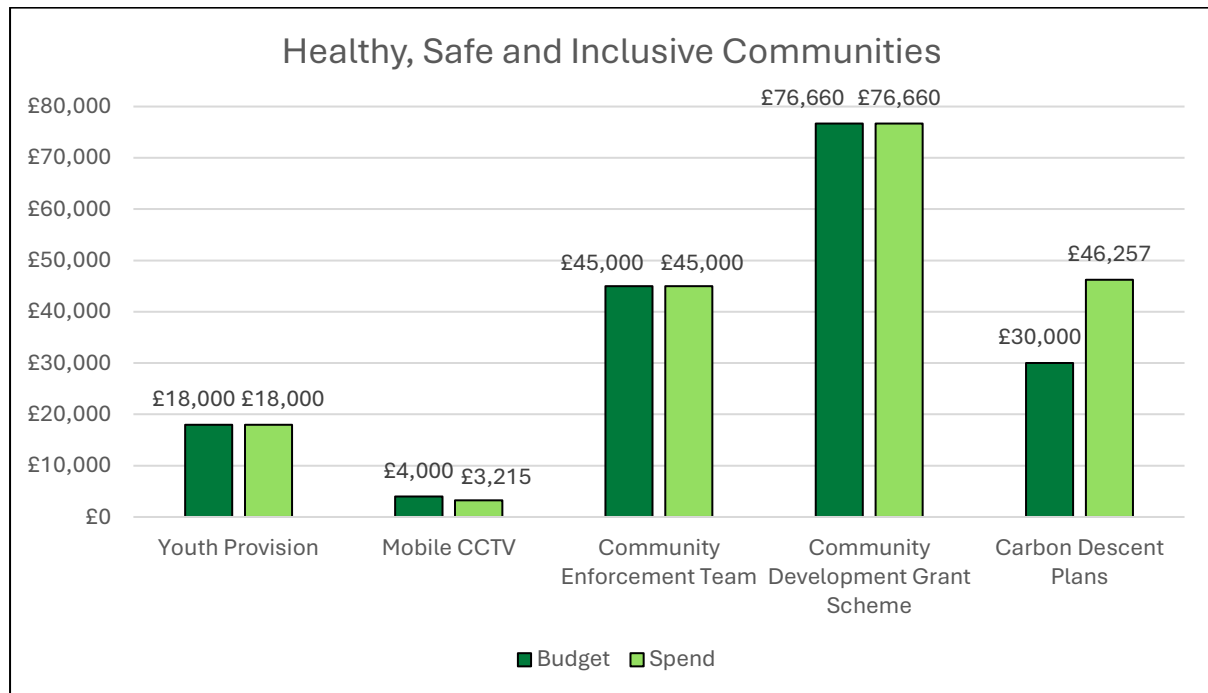


Chart 2.

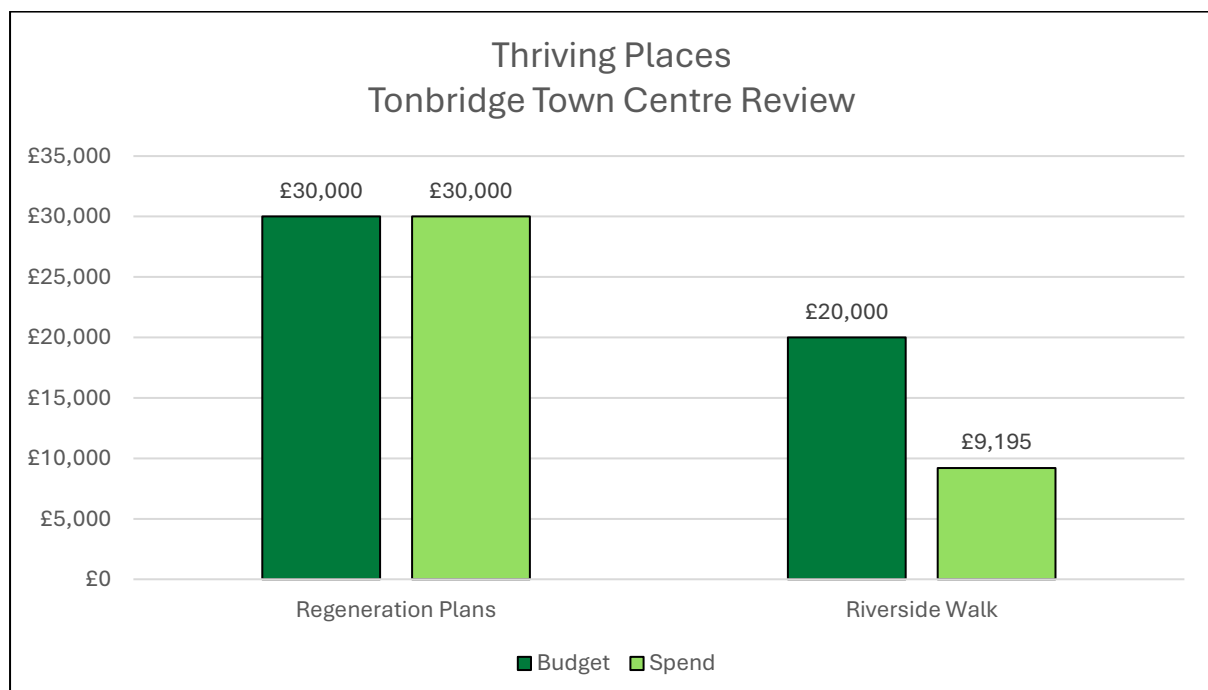


Chart 3.

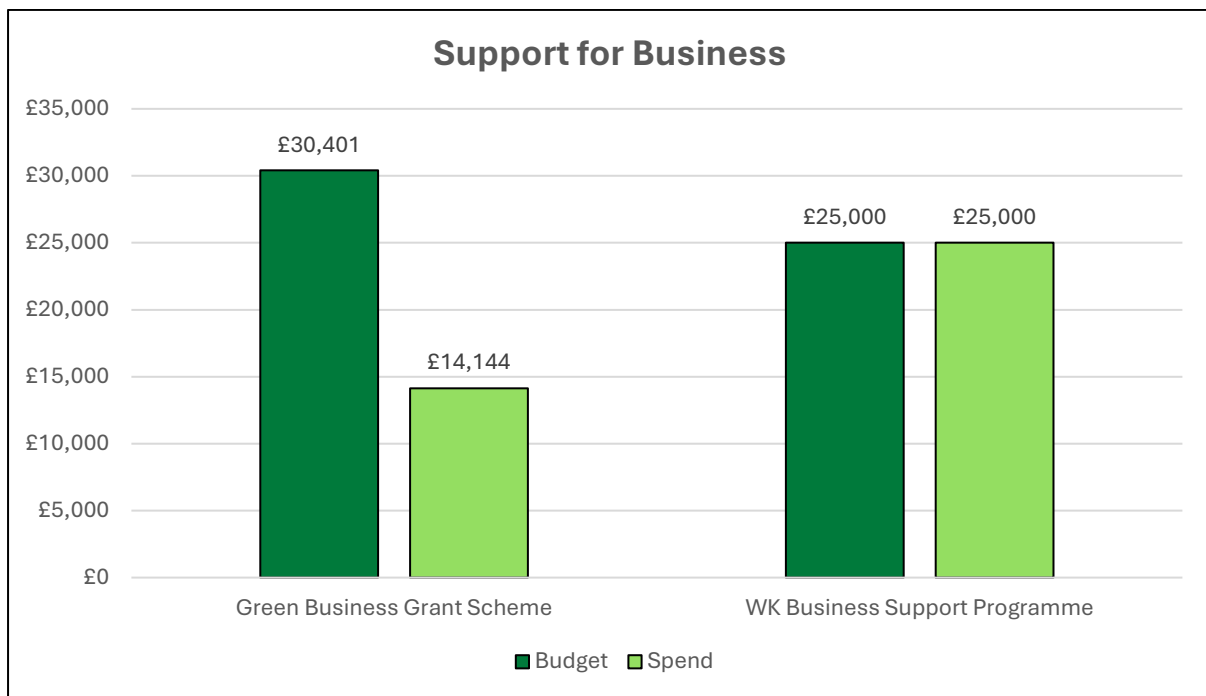


Chart 4.

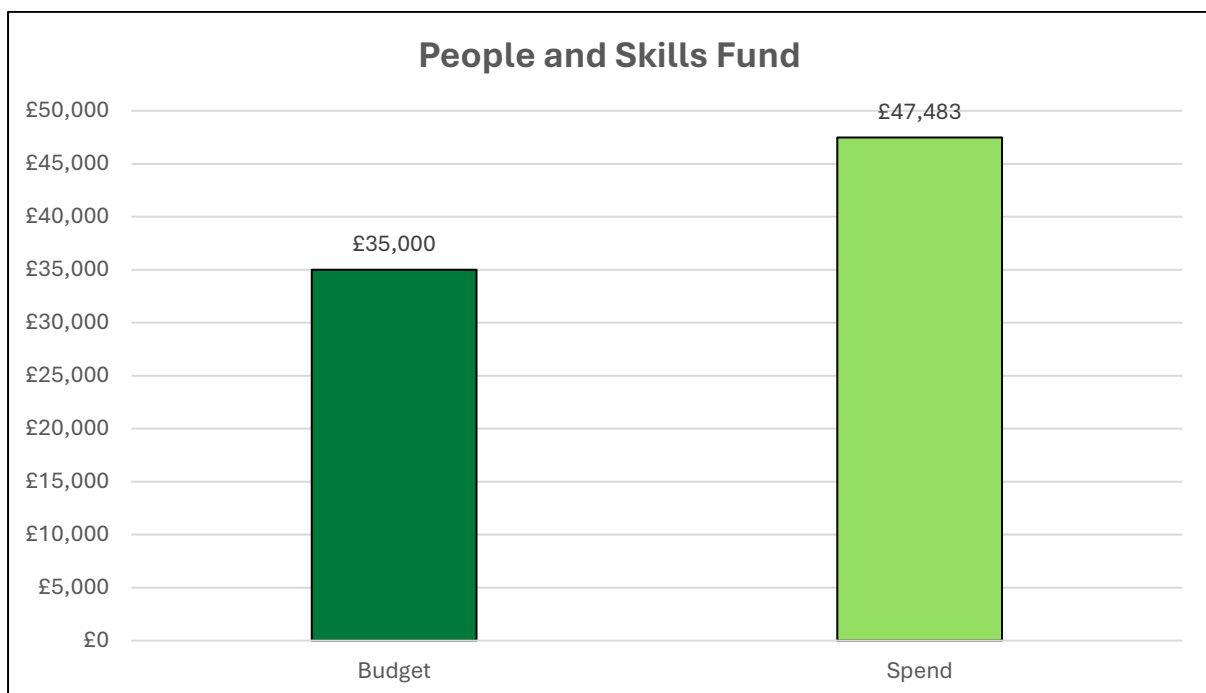


Chart 5.

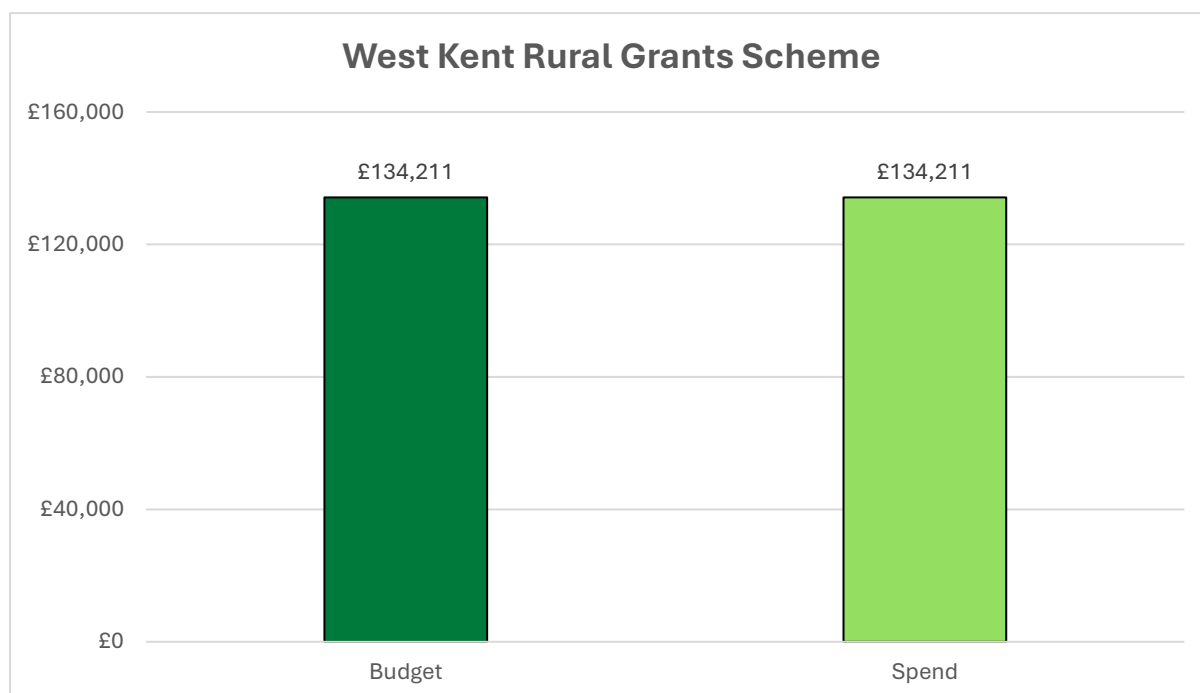


Chart Analysis

Most projects within the programme were delivered according to the original local investment plan agreed by Cabinet in March 2025. The notable exceptions were:

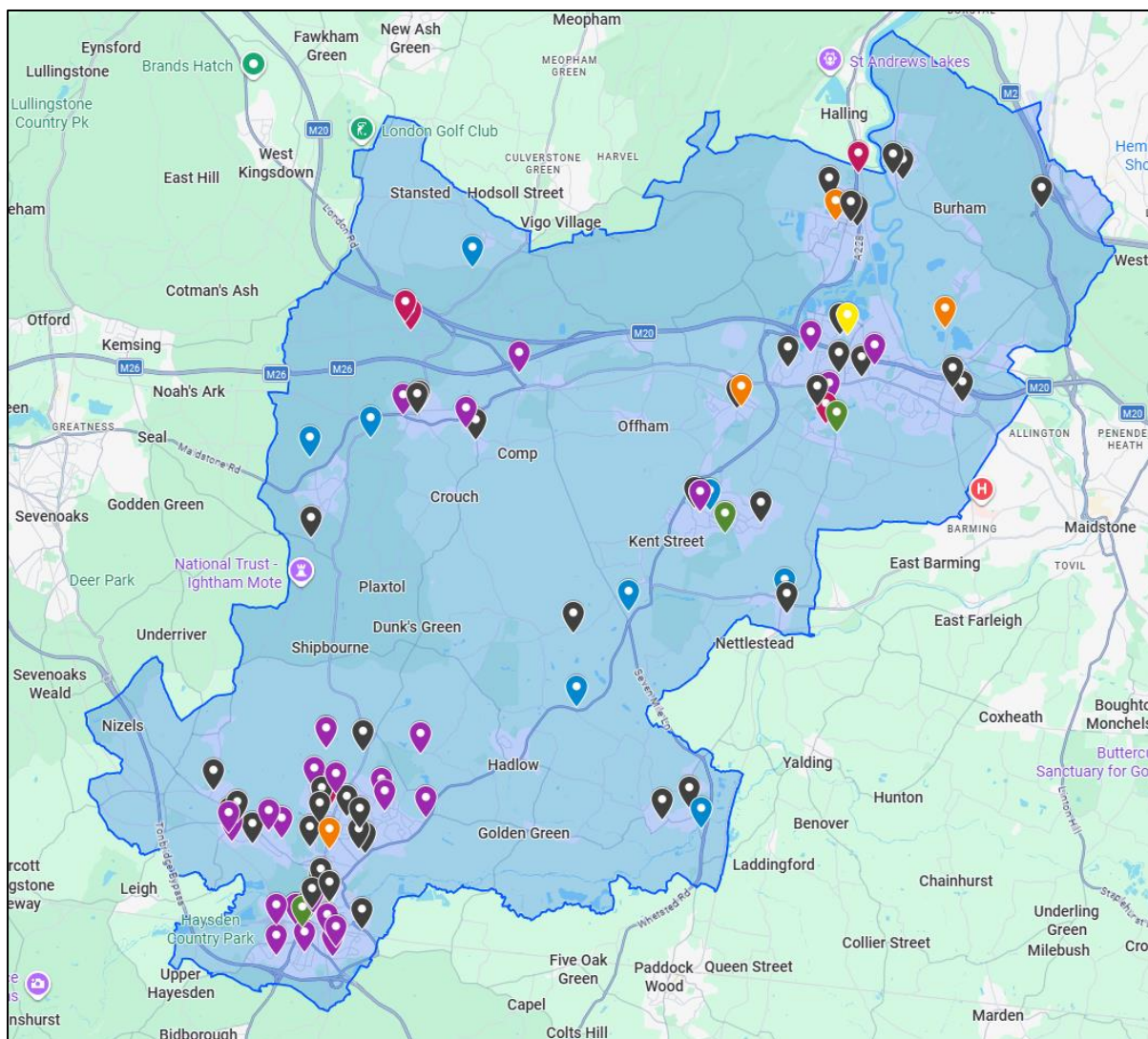
- 1) Green Business Grant Scheme: an underspend of £16,257 capital due to two main factors:
 - i) A low number of applications leading to fewer individual grants being awarded, and
 - ii) The non-delivery of projects that were awarded funding. This was disappointing as previous rounds had been well-subscribed to, but having investigated further it seems the main reason was the availability of other funding streams at the time on preferential terms. As a result, the intervention rate was increased from 40% to 50% for the scheme in 2026/27 and has again been well-subscribed to (see [Lessons Learned](#)).
- 2) Carbon Descent Plans: this project received an additional £16,257 due to the underspend of the Green Business Grant Scheme to ensure the full capital allocation was spent, as detailed above.
- 3) Riverside Walk: this project was funded through both UKSPF and time-limited s.106 funds. To ensure that as much s.106 was spent as possible, this source of funding was prioritised, with the UKSPF allocation having the flexibility to be re-allocated. As a result, there was a UKSPF underspend of £10,805 revenue which was used to support other existing UKSPF projects.
- 4) People and Skills Fund: more UKSPF revenue funding was spent to absorb the underspend of the Riverside Walk project, as detailed above.

The possibility that these amendments to the investment plan may be required had been pre-empted earlier in the financial year in a Cabinet Member report (Decision – D250118MEM) which set out a number of contingency arrangements.

Geographic Spread of Projects

A map detailing the individual projects and their location within the borough is shown below.

Click on the map to open in a web browser.



Map key	Project
Black	Community Development Grant Scheme – Place-Specific
Blue	West Kent Rural Grant Scheme
Dark Red	Mobile CCTV Cameras
Green	Green Business Grant Scheme
Grey	Tonbridge Town Centre Review
Orange	Youth Provision
Purple	West Kent Business Support Programme
Yellow	Carbon Descent Plans

Both the Community Enforcement Team and the People and Skills Fund projects were delivered borough-wide and therefore do not feature on the map. Similarly, not all of the Community

Development Grant Scheme projects are included on the map as approximately 20% of these projects were delivered borough-wide.

Project Achievements

Below are tables which outline the outcomes and outputs achieved for both UKSPF and REPF projects. They also detail the levels of match-funding provided by each project.

Table 2.1 UKSPF outcomes, outputs and match-funding

Project	Outcomes	Outputs	Match-funding
Youth Provision	An increase of 423 neighbourhood crimes reported compared to the previous year. This is due to the CET encouraging people to report incidents of anti-social behaviour	1475 people benefiting directly	£0
Mobile CCTV			£0
Community Enforcement Team (CET)			£55,000
Community Development Grant Scheme	300 volunteering opportunities created	57 organisations receiving grants	£741,488
Tonbridge Town Centre Review	2 projects arising from funded feasibility studies	2 feasibility studies developed as a result of support	£40,600
Carbon Descent Plans	23,036 increased users of facilities	1 facility improved	£200,000
Green Business Grant Scheme	2 new to the firm technologies	3 low or zero carbon energy infrastructure installed; 3 enterprises receiving grants	£29,905
West Kent Business Support Programme	20 enterprises with improved productivity	10 enterprises receiving grants; 138 enterprises receiving non-financial support	£3,000
People and Skills Fund	276 people gained basic skills following support; 36 people gaining a qualification	415 people reached; 128 people supported to access basic skills courses	£39,476
Total match-funding:			£1,109,469

REPF Programme

Further rounds of the West Kent Rural Grant Scheme took place between July and September of 2025 with a deadline for completion by December 2025. One hundred percent of the £134,211 budget was allocated to 8 projects by early September 2025 and had been fully spent by early March 2026.

Table 2.2 REPF outcomes, outputs and match-funding

Project	Number of projects supported	Outcomes	Outputs	Match-funding
Thriving Places	1	500 increased users of facilities / amenities	1 amenity / facility created or improved; 1 tourism, culture or heritage asset created or improved; 1 organisation receiving grants	£21,753
Support for Business	7	1 job created as a result of support; 7 jobs safeguarded as a result of support; 5 of enterprises adopting new to the firm technologies or processes	3 amenities / facilities created or improved; 7 enterprises receiving grants; 1 farm diversification project supported; 5 microbusinesses supported	£118,777
Total match-funding:				£140,530

Programme Summary

After four years, the UKSPF programme has now come to an end. Overall, 20 individual initiatives were supported with match-funding across both UKSPF and REPF programmes totalling £4,259,082.

Some key headlines of the programme were:

- Total UKSPF match-funding came to £3,118,502
- REPF match-funding totalled £1,140,580
- 248 enterprises and organisations received grants (207 UKSPF and 41 REPF)
- 464 volunteering opportunities created
- 14 jobs created (4 UKSPF and 10 REPF)
- 55 jobs safeguarded (12 UKSPF and 43 REPF)
- 54 people gained a qualification
- 372 enterprises received business support

Lessons Learned for 2025-26

The Economic Development Team have the following lessons learned/recommendations that relate to this additional year of funding:

- Regular catch-up meetings involving Project Leads provided a helpful and supportive environment in which to communicate successes and challenges and as such gave early insight into any issues that needed to be addressed.
- The relatively low number of Green Business Grant applications received led to several improvements and changes designed to help the success of future rounds of the scheme. Firstly, the grant intervention rate was increased from 40% to 50% to increase its attractiveness. Secondly, the need for successful applicants to secure all relevant permissions (e.g., planning, business rates, food hygiene etc) prior to commencing works was reinforced. Further details of such permissions were relayed to the beneficiaries ensuring they had all the necessary information when they were sent their Grant Offer Letters. This helped minimise any potential time delays.
- The claims process for the People and Skills Fund proved to be more time-consuming than anticipated. This was partly due to the scheme being more concerned with small revenue expenditure (e.g., wages, rent, utilities) rather than typically more straightforward capital expenditure, as per our other grant schemes (such as the Green Business Grant Scheme). Therefore, this made it a lengthier process for the beneficiary to evidence. If future rounds of this fund were to occur, then we would ensure the process was more adapted to the nature of the projects, making it easier for both the beneficiary to evidence and for the staff member to verify.
- For many of our grant schemes, the deadline for claiming was in January 2026 which meant that sufficient time was given for any delays to projects to occur before the end of the financial year. On a number of occasions small extensions were given, which helped to ensure projects were delivered.
- The increase in reports of neighbourhood crime as set out in the outcome for our 'Healthy, Safe and Inclusive Communities' projects is not necessarily a negative outcome. There is much evidence to suggest that it was the encouragement by the Community Enforcement Team to report incidents of anti-social behaviour, which in turn enabled more action to be taken to remedy them. It could also be argued that this level of engagement and subsequent action may lead to greater public trust and more community cohesion.
- The West Kent Business Support Programme was successful despite taking some time to get started as a new service provider was used for 2025-26. The main issue came from the low attendance of the in-person workshops (average attendees numbered between 4 and 7). Therefore, these sessions were streamlined and moved online in the latter half of the project.
- Challenges were experienced with projects such as Carbon Descent Plans and the Tonbridge Town Centre Review due to the more complicated nature of the works within limited timeframes.

Conclusion

The overall conclusion is that whilst some minor amendments had to be made that tweaked the programme slightly, a huge amount has been achieved by the programme in 2025/26 (as set out in this evaluation report). It is clear that there will not be a further extension to this programme, but by producing this evaluation, useful information and learning has been gathered that will help to inform the delivery of any future programme funding that is received in the years ahead.

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

25 June 2026

Part 1 - Public

Matters for Information



Cabinet Member	N/A
Responsible Officer	Damian Roberts, Chief Executive
Report Author	Claire Whitfield, Personal Assistant to Chief Executive & Complaints Officer

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman – Annual Review Letter

1 Summary and Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The annual report of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman regarding complaints received and dealt with by them over the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 is presented for information.

2 Corporate Strategy Priority Area

- 2.1 Efficient services for all our residents, maintaining an effective council.
- 2.2 Complaints provide an important opportunity to receive feedback on the quality of the Council's services and contribute positively to continued service improvements.

3 Introduction and Background

- 3.1 Complaints are an important way for the Council to receive feedback from its residents and for the Council to address any concerns that have been raised in a timely way. As a Council committed to high performance, complaints are also valuable in helping identify areas for improvement. This is why the Council encourages residents to raise a complaint if they are unhappy with the service they have received.
- 3.2 Given the huge number of transactions and interactions that the Council has with its customers, it is inevitable that a small number of these result in a complaint being raised. As part of the Council's complaints policy, if a customer remains unhappy with the outcome of their complaint, they also have the option to escalate their concern to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

- 3.3 Each year the Ombudsman provides the Borough Council with a report of the formal complaints it has dealt with and the outcomes of those complaints. This report covers the period for 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.
- 3.4 The Ombudsman usually only considers complaints that have already been considered through the Council's complaints process and where there is not a separate statutory appeals process.

4 Outcomes

- 4.1 The Ombudsman received 13 formal complaints over the year from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. The outcomes were as follows:
- Complaints not for Ombudsman = 3
 - Complaints assessed/closed = 8
 - Complaints investigated = 2
 - Complaints upheld = 2
- 4.2 A copy of the Ombudsman's letter is attached at Annex 1.
- 4.3 Details of the complaints are attached at Annex 2.
- 4.4 The complaints upheld by the Ombudsman relate to Revenues & Benefits (ref: 24013728) and Housing (ref: 24014165).
- 4.5 The decision regarding a Revenues & Benefits case was upheld because the Ombudsman concluded that the Council had not provided the complainant with the right of appeal against the decision to refuse discretionary relief on council tax. The Ombudsman asked the Council to reissue the decision with the correctly applied rights, apologise, pay £100 and ensure improved procedures for the future. It is important to note that the complainant did not raise their concern with the Council using the Council's complaint process, despite having been advised to do so on three occasions. Therefore, the complainant did not provide the Council with the opportunity to properly investigate and resolve their concerns. This was pointed out in a letter from the Chief Executive to the Ombudsman which referenced the Ombudsman's own website's advice to complainants, i.e. to make use of the Council's complaints process before they make a complaint to the Ombudsman.
- 4.6 The second upheld decision related to a homelessness case, where the complaint concerned a household placed in unsuitable temporary accommodation for a period of ten months. This impacted on their family's well-being and the education of their children. The Ombudsman upheld the complaint because the location of the children's schools was not adequately considered before placing them. In a letter of apology, the Chief Executive outlined improvements already completed in

how the Council identifies and prioritises those who need to move back into an area when temporary accommodation becomes available, plus measures implemented to ensure the Council properly considers the wider suitability of properties before moving people to them in future. However, with high levels of demand and relatively short supply of suitable temporary accommodation, it remains challenging to meet the varying needs of homeless households beyond providing a safe and decent place to live.

5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 5.1 £100 discretionary payment to the Revenues & Benefits complainant. Payments of £1,500 to recognise unsuitable temporary accommodation for ten months (£150 per month), plus a £200 symbolic payment for inconvenience to the Housing complainant.

6 Risk Assessment

- 6.1 N/A

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 None

8 Consultation and Communications

- 8.1 The outcome of the annual review is communicated via this report.

9 Cross Cutting Issues

- 9.1 Climate Change and Biodiversity

- 9.1.1 Climate change advice has not been sought in the preparation of this report. The Council accepts complaints electronically either by email or via the Council's website and complaints are usually responded to by email. However, other channels are also available to ensure maximum access.

- 9.2 Equalities and Diversity

- 9.2.1 Equalities and diversity are important considerations in the delivery of Council services and the management of complaints.

- 9.3 Human Resources

- 9.3.1 Council staff are aware of the importance of complaints. The investigation and response to complaints is undertaken by senior officers.

9.4 Data Protection

9.4.1 The management and protection of data, including personal sensitive information, is an important consideration in the delivery of Council services and in the investigation and reporting of complaints.

Background Papers	None
Annexes	Annex 1 - Annual letter from Ombudsman to Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Annex 2 - Details of complaints

Annex 1

20 May 2026

By email

Mr Roberts
Chief Executive
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

Dear Mr Roberts

Annual Review letter 2025-26

I write to you with your annual summary of complaint statistics from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for the year ending 31 March 2026.

We recognise that local authorities continue to face significant pressures in delivering services to their communities. We hope the data and insight we share with you each year remains a useful tool for reflection and continuous improvement. Please consider it as part of your corporate governance processes.

[Your annual statistics are available here.](#)

In addition, you can find the detail of the decisions we have made about your Council, read reports we have issued, and view the service improvements your Council has agreed to make as a result of our investigations, as well as previous annual review letters.

We will write to organisations in July where there is exceptional practice or where we have concerns about complaint handling. Not all organisations will get a letter. If you do receive a letter it will be sent in advance of its publication on our website on 15 July 2026.

Supporting complaint and service improvement

We remain committed to supporting the sector to embed effective systems of redress. Where authorities are navigating reorganisation and devolution, we are ready to help ensure that robust complaint handling is built into new arrangements from the outset. Please do get in touch if your organisation would benefit from our advice and guidance.

Our [Complaint Handling Code](#), in force since April 2025, is now applied in our casework and offers structure and support to your local complaint system. Our training programme provides a flexible, expert-led route to building complaints capability across your teams, with courses open for individual delegates to book. Contact training@lgo.org.uk for more information.

Our Annual Review of Local Government Complaints will be published in July 2026, setting out the national picture of complaints, trends across service areas, and emerging systemic issues. We encourage you to read it alongside your own organisation's data.

Yours sincerely,

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Received

Reference	Authority	Category	Subcategory	Received
25002810	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Planning & Development	Other planning application	16/05/25
25003913	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Corporate & Other Services	Standards committees	18/06/25
25003966	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	Env Servs- Prot- Reg-other	02/06/25
25004357	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Planning & Development	Enforcement - other	05/06/25
25006119	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Planning & Development	Householder planning application	15/09/25
25009241	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Housing	Homelessness	09/09/25
25009896	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	NULL	NULL	04/08/25
25016459	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Planning & Development	Enforcement - other	10/11/25
25019061	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Housing	Private landlord/tenant issues	27/11/25
25020582	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Benefits & Tax	Housing benefit	11/12/25
25021788	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Housing	Allocations	29/12/25
25024294	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Planning & Development	Householder planning application	22/01/26
25024670	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Housing	Allocations	02/02/26
25025688	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Planning & Development	Other planning application	02/02/26

Decided

Reference	Authority	Category	Subcategory	Decided	Decision	Decision Reason	Remedy
24013728	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Benefits & Tax	Council tax	04/04/25	Upheld	fault & inj	Apology,Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble,Procedure or policy change/review
24014165	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Housing	Homelessness	08/07/25	Upheld	fault & inj	Apology,Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble
24017545	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Benefits & Tax	Council tax support	01/05/25	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault	
24021325	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Highways & Transport	Traffic management	21/05/25	Closed after initial enquiries	No worthwhile outcome achievable by investigation	
25002810	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Planning & Development	Other planning application	31/07/25	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged injustice	
25003913	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Corporate & Other Services	Standards committees	04/09/25	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault	
25003966	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	Env Servs- Prot- Reg-other	08/09/25	Closed after initial enquiries	Other Agency better placed	
25004357	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Planning & Development	Enforcement - other	20/08/25	Closed after initial enquiries	26B(2) not made in 12 months	
25006119	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Planning & Development	Householder planning application	25/11/25	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged injustice	
25009241	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Housing	Homelessness	04/02/26	Closed after initial enquiries	Not warranted by alleged fault	
25009896	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	NULL	NULL	04/08/25	Incomplete/Invalid	Person affected asks not to proceed	
25020582	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Benefits & Tax	Housing benefit	11/12/25	Incomplete/Invalid	Insufficient information to proceed and PA advised	
25025688	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Planning & Development	Other planning application	02/02/26	Referred back for local resolution	Premature Decision - advice given	

Compliance

Reference	Authority	Category	Subcategory	Decided	Remedy	Remedy Achieved	Satisfaction with Compliance
24013728	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Benefits & Tax	Council tax	03/04/25	Apology Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble Procedure or policy change/review	18/05/25	Service improvement late. Personal remedy satisfied on time.
24014165	Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Housing	Homelessness	07/07/25	Apology Financial redress: Avoidable distress/time and trouble	24/07/25	Remedy satisfied on time

Notes

Explanatory notes	
Cases received	
Cases with a recorded received date between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026. Status as of 7 April 2026.	
Cases decided	
Cases with a recorded decision date between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026. Status as of 7 April 2026. Please note that some cases may have been reopened since that date, with either a decision outcome pending or a new decision outcome recorded.	
We report our decisions by the following outcomes:	
Invalid or incomplete: We were not given enough information to consider the issue.	These decision outcomes are included in the number of cases reported as not for us / not ready for us in the complaints overview section on the online map.
Advice given: We provided early advice or explained where to go for the right help.	
Referred back for local resolution: We found the complaint was brought to us too early because the organisation involved was not given the chance to consider it first.	
Closed after initial enquiries: We assessed the complaint but decided against completing an investigation. This might be because the law says we're not allowed to investigate it, or because it would not be an effective use of public funds if we did.	This decision outcome is included in the number of cases reported as assessed and closed in the complaints overview section on the online map.
Upheld: We completed an investigation and found evidence of fault, or the organisation provided a suitable remedy early on.	These decision outcomes are included in the number of cases reported as investigated in the complaints overview section on the online map.
Not upheld: We completed an investigation but did not find evidence of fault.	
The following decision reasons are satisfactory remedy decisions , i.e. upheld cases where we were satisfied the authority had already provided a suitable remedy to resolve the complaint: <i>Upheld - Injustice remedied during organisations complaint processes</i> <i>Upheld - fault & inj - no further action organisation already remedied</i>	These decision reasons are included in the number of cases reported as satisfactory remedies provided by the council on the online map.
Compliance outcomes	
Cases with a recorded remedy achieved date between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026. Status as of 27 April 2026. The relevant date is the date of compliance with the recommendations (for example, the date on an apology letter) rather than the date the evidence is provided to us. If we were notified after 27 April 2026 of a remedy achieved before 31 March 2026, this will not be included here. Where the 'Satisfaction with Compliance' column records a non-compliance outcome of 'Remedy not complete and not satisfied', the 'Remedy Achieved' date designates the date the case was closed and a new case opened	
This year we are publishing a timely compliance statistic alongside the overall compliance rate. The statistic will show both the number and percentage of cases where agreed recommendations were recorded as completed on time. To be recorded as 'on time', all parts of a multi part recommendation need to have been recorded as delivered within agreed timescales. Alongside this new statistic we are providing more detailed 'Satisfaction with Compliance' outcomes. These are: - <i>Remedy satisfied on time</i> - <i>Remedy satisfied late. Personal remedy and service improvement late.</i> - <i>Personal remedy late. No service improvement recommendations.</i> - <i>Personal remedy late. Service improvement satisfied on time.</i> - <i>Service improvement late. No personal remedy.</i> - <i>Service improvement late. Personal remedy satisfied on time.</i> - <i>Remedy not complete and not satisfied.</i>	

Executive Decisions Record - April 2026

Decision Number	Title	Cabinet Member	Date of Decision	Date Published	Call-in period ends	Called in	Scrutiny Committee Consideration	Referred back to Cabinet	Referred back to Council	Council referred to Cabinet	Date Decision Effective	
D260039CAB	Public Space Protection Order	Cabinet	07.04.26	09.04.26	16.04.26						17.04.26	
D260040CAB	Review of Roadside Nature Reserves											
D260041CAB	Homeslessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2026-2031											
D260042CAB	Local Plan Regulation 18 (Stage 2) Consultation - Update											
D260043CAB	Planning Enforcement Plan Review											
D260044CAB	Poult Wood Golf Course - Air Source Heat Pumps - Tender Report											
D260045CAB	Tonbridge Town Centre Programme Board - Notes of 6 March 2026											
D260046MEM	Council's response to the Planning committee reform: statutory consultation on draft Regulations and guidance	Planning	22.04.26	23.04.26	30.04.26						01.05.26	
D260047MEM	Lease of Wateringbury Car Park to Wateringbury Parish Council	Housing, Environment and Economy	27.04.26	28.04.26	06.05.26						07.05.26	

Executive Decisions Record - May 2026

Decision Number	Title	Cabinet Member	Date of Decision	Date Published	Call-in period ends	Called in	Scrutiny Committee Consideration	Referred back to Cabinet	Referred back to Council	Council referred to Cabinet	Date Decision Effective
D260048MEM	Change to Cabinet Portfolios -	Leader	01.05.26	05.05.26	12.05.26						13.05.26
D260049MEM	Purchase of Land from Kent County Council at Sovereign Way in Tonbridge	Housing, Environment and Economy	05.05.26	06.05.26	13.05.26						14.05.26
D260050MEM	Business Rates Discretionary Relief Awards	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	06.05.26	15.05.26	22.05.26						23.05.26
D260051MEM	Business Rates Discretionary Relief Awards	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	06.05.26	15.05.26	22.05.26						23.05.26
D260052MEM	Application for Section 13A 1(C) Council Tax Discount	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	06.05.26	15.05.26	22.05.26						23.05.26
D260053MEM	Waste Marketing Plan 2026/27	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	20.05.26	22.05.26	01.06.26						02.06.26
D260054MEM	Climate Change Monitoring and Reporting	Housing, Environment and Economy	20.05.26	22.05.26	01.06.26						02.06.26
D260055MEM	New Lease Arrangements at 16A Chapman Way, East Malling	Housing, Environment and Economy	27.05.26	27.05.26	03.06.26						04.06.26
D260056MEM	Scoping use of Article 4 Direction for HMOs	Planning	19.05.26	28.05.26	04.06.26						05.06.26

Executive Decisions Record - June 2026

Decision Number	Title	Cabinet Member	Date of Decision	Date Published	Call-in period ends	Called in	Scrutiny Committee Consideration	Referred back to Cabinet	Referred back to Council	Council referred to Cabinet	Date Decision Effective
D260057MEM	Temporary Increase in Part-time hours of Permanent Property Lawyer post	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	28.05.26	29.05.26	05.06.26						06.06.26
D260058CAB	Risk Management	Cabinet	02.06.26	04.06.25	11.06.26						12.06.26
D260059CAB	Section 106 Processes and considerations										
D260060CAB	Annual Service Delivery Plan 2025/26 - Q3										
D260061CAB	Updating the Council's Affordable Housing Protocol										
D260062CAB	South-West Kent Waste Services Contract - Options Report										
D260063CAB	New Angel Leisure Centre - Financial Review										
D260064CAB	Flytipping and Enforcement Options Report										
D260065CAB	Management of Haysden Country Park										
D260066MEM	Application for Section 13A 1(C) Council Tax Discount	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	04.06.26	05.06.26	12.06.26						13.06.26
D260067MEM	Application for Section 13A 1(C) Council Tax Discount	Finance, Waste and Technical Services	04.06.26	05.06.26	12.06.26						13.06.26

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**TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING KEY DECISIONS**

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, at least 28 days before a key decision is expected to be taken a Notice of Forthcoming Key Decisions will be published. A 'key decision' is an executive decision which is likely either

- (a) to result in the local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the local authority's budget for the service or functions to which the decision relates.

'Significant' when applied to expenditure or savings shall mean a sum in excess of £100,000 or such other sum as may be specified in any enactment or other statutory provision.

or

- (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the local authority.

The Notice of Forthcoming Key Decisions sets out:

- (a) the matter in respect of which a key decision is to be made;
- (b) details of the decision taker and the date on which the key decision will be made;
- (c) a list of documents to be submitted to the decision taker for consideration in relation to the matter;
- (d) the address from which, subject to any prohibition or restriction on their disclosure, copies of or extracts from any document listed is available and the procedure for requesting details.

All key decisions will be made by the Cabinet on the dates specified unless otherwise stated*. The agenda and documents to be submitted to the Cabinet (unless they contain exempt information) will be available for inspection at the Council Offices and on the website 5 clear working days before the meeting. Copies or extracts are available from committee.services@tmbc.gov.uk or Democratic Services, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling ME19 4LZ.

This document also gives notice of the Council's intention to hold a private meeting (or part thereof) of the Cabinet. It indicates any items where it is likely that the public will be excluded because public discussion would disclose confidential or exempt information and the reasons in each case. Any representations against the intention to hold a private meeting may be made to committee.services@tmbc.gov.uk or Committee Services, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling ME19 4LZ.

Members of the Cabinet and their areas of responsibility:

Councillor Matt Boughton (Leader)
Councillor Robin Betts (Housing, Environment and Economy)
Councillor Martin Coffin (Deputy Leader; and Finance, Waste and Technical Services)
Councillor Des Keers (Community Services)
Councillor Adem Mehmet (Infrastructure and Tonbridge Regeneration)
Councillor Mike Taylor (Planning)

(*Note: This Notice is subject to change as the reporting/governance timetable may change and it may become necessary to defer decisions until the next meeting of Cabinet)

NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING KEY DECISIONS - JUNE TO JULY 2026

Description of Decision	Date of Cabinet	Who is to be consulted	Contact Officer	Documents to be submitted to Cabinet	Public or Private (reason if Private)
Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy - Adoption	Between 1 Jun 2026 and 31 Jul 2026	<p>Internal consultation via Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee and Cabinet as detailed in the reports to be considered by Members.</p> <p>(Note: This matter is a non-key decision until the Strategy is presented for adoption).</p>	Head of Housing and Regulatory Services	Officer report	Public
Decisions relating to Local Government Re-organisation (if required)	Between 1 July 2026 and 30 Sep 2026	Internal consultation via Cabinet as detailed in the reports to be considered by Members.	Chief Executive	Officer report	Public

Description of Decision	Date of Cabinet	Who is to be consulted	Contact Officer	Documents to be submitted to Cabinet	Public or Private (reason if Private)
Proposals for Future of Council-owned Assets in Tonbridge	Between 1 Jun 2026 and 30 Sep 2026	Internal consultation via Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee and Cabinet as detailed in the reports to be considered by Members.	Head of Housing and Regulatory Services	Officer report	Fully exempt Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)
Lease Arrangements for Tonbridge Farm Sportsground - Tonbridge Angels Football Club	Between 1 Jun 2026 and 31 Jul 2026	Internal consultation via Finance, Regeneration and Property Scrutiny Select Committee and Cabinet as detailed in the reports to be considered by Members.	Head of Administrative and Property Services	Officer report	Fully exempt Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

Description of Decision	Date of Cabinet	Who is to be consulted	Contact Officer	Documents to be submitted to Cabinet	Public or Private (reason if Private)
Tonbridge Castle – Proposals for replacement of Tonbridge Gateway	Between 1 Jun 2026 and 31 Jul 2026	Internal consultation via Communities and Environment Scrutiny Select Committee and Cabinet as detailed in the reports to be considered by Members.	Head of Administrative and Property Services	Officer report	Fully exempt Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)
Appointment of Clerk of Works for Blue Bell Hill Temporary Accommodation Project	Between 1 Jun 2026 and 31 Jul 2026	Internal consultation via Cabinet as detailed in the reports to be considered by Members.	Head of Administrative and Property Services	Officer report	Fully exempt Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

Description of Decision	Date of Cabinet	Who is to be consulted	Contact Officer	Documents to be submitted to Cabinet	Public or Private (reason if Private)
Waste Contract - Further Options (if required)	Between 1 Jun 2026 and 31 Jul 2026	Internal consultation via Communities and Environment Scrutiny Select Committee and Cabinet as detailed in the reports to be considered by Members.	Street Scene Manager	Officer report	Fully exempt Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)
Tonbridge Town Centre Programme Board - Recommendations (if any)	Between 1 Jun 2026 and 31 Jul 2026	Internal consultation via Cabinet as detailed in the reports to be considered by Members.	Tonbridge Town Centre Programme Manager	Officer report	Part exempt
<p>Contact: committee.services@tmbc.gov.uk</p> <p>Published: 5 May 2026</p>					

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING KEY DECISIONS

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- (a) the matter in respect of which a key decision is to be made;
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Members of the Cabinet and their areas of responsibility:

Councillor Matt Boughton (Leader)
Councillor Robin Betts (Housing, Environment and Economy)
Councillor Martin Coffin (Deputy Leader; and Finance, Waste and Technical Services)
Councillor Des Keers (Community Services)
Councillor Adem Mehmet (Infrastructure and Tonbridge Regeneration)
Councillor Mike Taylor (Planning)

(*Note: This Notice is subject to change as the reporting/governance timetable may change and it may become necessary to defer decisions until the next meeting of Cabinet)

NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING KEY DECISIONS: JUNE/JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2026

Description of Decision	Date of Cabinet	Who is to be consulted	Contact Officer	Documents to be submitted to Cabinet	Public or Private (reason if Private)
Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeping Strategy - Adoption	Between 29 Jun 2026 and 30 Sep 2026	<p>Internal consultation via Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee and Cabinet as detailed in the reports to be considered by Members.</p> <p>(Note: This matter is a non-key decision until the Strategy is presented for adoption).</p>	Head of Housing and Regulatory Services	Officer report	Public
Martin Square, Larkfield - Lease Arrangements	Between 29 Jun 2026 and 30 Sep 2026	Internal consultation via Cabinet as detailed in the reports to be considered by Members.	Head of Administrative and Property Services	Officer report	Fully exempt Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

Description of Decision	Date of Cabinet	Who is to be consulted	Contact Officer	Documents to be submitted to Cabinet	Public or Private (reason if Private)
Tender Award for Audio Visual System	Between 29 Jun 2026 and 30 Sep 2026	Internal consultation via Cabinet as detailed in the reports to be considered by Members.	Head of Administrative and Property Services	Officer report	Fully exempt Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)
Waste Contract - Vehicle Financing Appraisal	Between 29 Jun 2026 and 29 Sep 2026	Internal consultation via Cabinet as detailed in the reports to be considered by Members.	Head of Street Scene and Leisure Services	Officer report	Fully exempt Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)
Decisions relating to Local Government Re-organisation (if required)	Between 1 Jul 2026 and 30 Sep 2026	Internal consultation via Cabinet as detailed in the reports to be considered by Members.	Chief Executive	Officer report	Public

Description of Decision	Date of Cabinet	Who is to be consulted	Contact Officer	Documents to be submitted to Cabinet	Public or Private (reason if Private)
Use of Planning Controls for Housing	Between 1 Jul 2026 and 30 Sep 2026	Internal consultation via Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee and Cabinet as detailed in the reports to be considered by Members.	Head of Planning	Officer report	Public
Tonbridge Town Centre Programme Board - Recommendations (if any)	Between 1 Jul 2026 and 31 Jul 2026	Internal consultation via Cabinet as detailed in the reports to be considered by Members.	Tonbridge Town Centre Programme Manager	Officer report	Part exempt
Proposals for Future of Council-owned Assets in Tonbridge	Between 1 Jul 2026 and 30 Sep 2026	Internal consultation via Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee and Cabinet as detailed in the reports to be considered by Members.	Head of Housing and Regulatory Services	Officer report	Fully exempt Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

Description of Decision	Date of Cabinet	Who is to be consulted	Contact Officer	Documents to be submitted to Cabinet	Public or Private (reason if Private)
Future of Gibson West Building	Between 1 Jul 2026 and 30 Sep 2026	Internal consultation via Finance, Regeneration and Property Scrutiny Select Committee and Cabinet as detailed in the reports to be considered by Members.	Head of Administrative and Property Services	Officer report	Fully exempt Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)
<p>Contact: committee.services@tmbc.gov.uk</p> <p>Publication: 2 June 2026</p>					

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEE – UPCOMING MATTERS
2026-27**

C=Council; CAB = Cabinet; DEL = Delegated to Committee; INFO = matters for information. Cabinet are responsible for ALL Key Decisions (KD). Some Non-Key Decisions (NKD) can be taken by Cabinet Members outside of the meeting.

DECISION (TITLE)	DESCRIPTION	C/CAB/ DEL/INFO	KD/NKD	CAB MEMBER DN Y/N	PART 1 OR 2	MEETING DATE	OFFICER IN PERSON ATTENDANCE Y/N
Annual Service Delivery Plan Q1	Q1	CAB	NKD	N		10 September 2026	
Communication	Update on media and Comms/discussion around the emerging media & comms strategy	Info			1		
S106 and Health infrastructure							
Preparation for the change to a Unitary Authority		Info					
Record of Executive Decisions							
Work Programme							
Notice of Forthcoming Key Decisions		Info					

DECISION (TITLE)	DESCRIPTION	C/CAB/ DEL/INFO	KD/NKD	CAB MEMBER DN Y/N	PART 1 OR 2	MEETING DATE	OFFICER IN PERSON ATTENDANCE Y/N
Annual report of Chair of Overview and Scrutiny		CAB				12 November 2026	
Angel Leisure Centre	General update following Full Council in October						
Record of Executive Decisions							
Work Programme							
Notice of Forthcoming Key Decisions		Info					
Matters Arising from Services between cycles: To be identified							
Setting the Budget 2027/28						21 January 2027	
Setting the Council Tax 2027/28							
Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2027/28							
Angel Leisure Centre update							

Record of Executive Decisions							
Work Programme							
Notice of Forthcoming Key Decisions		Info					
Matters Arising from Services between cycles: To be identified							
							22 April 2027
Record of Executive Decisions							
Work Programme							
Notice of Forthcoming Key Decisions							
Matters Arising from Services between cycles: To be identified							

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Agenda Item 15

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent due to special circumstances and of which notice has been given to the Chief Executive.

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Agenda Item 16

The Chairman to move that the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting during consideration of any items the publication of which would disclose exempt information.

**ANY REPORTS APPEARING AFTER THIS PAGE CONTAIN EXEMPT
INFORMATION**

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Agenda Item 17

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent due to special circumstances and of which notice has been given to the Chief Executive.

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